

THE
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SECRETARY OF THE
NAVY
WASHINGTON, D. C.
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TO THE
HONORABLE THE SECRETARY OF THE
NAVY
WASHINGTON, D. C.
FROM
THE
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SUBJECT
OF THE
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NAVY





Despise is that mā whiche
dothe the worke of god
negligently. This is
wryten in the xlviii. cha.
pytre of the prophet Iere
remie. God whose ma
iestie is incomparable / despiseth hym
that is vnderoute in his service / he ab
horreth the sluggard / he despyeth the
wycked and the negligent / moreover if
the princes of this worlde loke for to be
seruyd with due reuerence & attendaunce /
howe much more then doth the lord of
all thynges (whose maiestie surely is in
spite) wyl / commaunde / and require
that we shall serue hym with most prin
cipall diligence. The Apostle therfore
spueth vs monicly sayeng in this wyle.
Let vs serue god with feare & diligence.
And in another place he exhortyth vs in
this wyle. Laboure for your saluacion
with feare / awe / and dread / for surely
those thre thynges do cause diligence /
they induce vs vnto spirituall circum
spectiō and distroy all negligence ac
cordinge vnto the sayenge of scripture:
which is this. Let vs alwayes walke cir
cūspectly befoze god euermore fearyng.
lesse we

The p[re]face

lest we in any wyse do offend the
sence of the almighty which is
all thynges. And lyke as feare of god
moueth mannes mynde for to eschewe
peryll / even so the feare of god causyth
vs to be circumspect in eschewyng synne.
Therefore as it is wryten in the booke of
Ecclesiasticus / he that is without feare
maye not be iustified. And Salomon
sayth. The feare of god is a well of lyfe /
for to auoide the ruyne of death / whiche
also sayth in another place / he that fea-
ryth god is neglygent in nothyng. Un-
doubtydly this detestable negligence
whiche deserueth malediction and euer-
lasting dampnation / is most repugnant
and contrarie vnto holisome sollicitude /
and vertuous diligence. Seyng therefore
that the feare of god ingendryth dili-
gence / it must nedys folowe that a man
fearyng god shall in nothyng be negly-
gent / it is not without cause therefore
that Dauid the maker of psalms sayd /
feare ye god all that be his saynctes / for
they that feare hym shall want nothyng
whiche texte is to be vnderstanden of no
bonde or scruple feare / but of such feare
as a chyld hath of his father. Seynge
therefore that the feare of god is so much

A. ii. necessa

The preface.

necessaty and holisome/we are wel war-
nyd in al the holy scripture/for to do all
our workes haupng before our eyen the
feare of god/in so much that our laudes
wherby we please hym / and our glorie
wherby we reioysed in hym / ought to
be ioynd and haue a sent of this godly
heart/wherupon the holy pphete sayth
Serue ye the lord with feare/s reioyse
in hym with dread. And certaynly to
serue god after this fashyoun is a spe-
ciall gyfte of his grace / accordyng vnto
the sayenge of Job / from the north
comyth gold/and from god comyth the
symonious or fearful prayse/for syns
that all our ryghteousnes (as the pro-
phete than wytnesseth) is in the syghte
of god / but a ragge of a woman vnpu-
rified/and syns that in all our other ac-
tes and doynges there happen many dis-
traccions and defautes / ought we not
then to be alwayes circumspecte / ware/
diligent/and fearfull/lest euyn in doyng
our good workes/we offende our lordes/
and be reioyced of that ryghteous and
dreadfull iuge/for lyke as p^r holy abbot
Agathon said. If god shuld lay agaynst
our manyfolde negligence & defautes/
that we happen to incurre whylest we
are

The preface.

are prayeng / and doubtidly we coulde
be saued. wherfore let vs endeuour ouer
selus with our hole power for to eschewe
this detestable negligence in all our di
uine seruyce / wherupon fryer Thomas
in the. liii. question of his worke affir
meth that negligence is the leuyng of
due and conuenient busynes / and is di
rectely repugnaunt and contrarie vnto
spirituall and vertuos diligence. And ly
ke wyse as diligence is a specyall poppe
of wysedom / euen so is negligence the
chefe poppe of folyshenes / for as saynt
Nobore sayth. Negligens. i. non elige
And so is he y^e taketh none hede what
is good nor what is euill / therfore lyke
as the takyng hede & chusynge of those
thynges that are mete and necessarye
for a good purpose / is an ayde of a wyse
man / so the leuyng of and refusynge of
such thynges is very negligēce / which
is an acte of a folle / and comyth for lacke
of good aduysement and discrecion / for
if a man wolde inwardly conside the
authorite and worthynes of goddes
hyghe commaundement and his moste
dreadfull and ryghtuos iugemente /

A. iii. and

The preface.

and there with all his rewarde and joye
of them that obey hym/and the torment
tes and paynes of them that dysobey
hym / he shulde forthewith begynne to
tremble / to abhorre negligence/and sy-
nally to do the worke of god with all dy-
ligence. Notwithstandyng S. Gregorie
wryteth that Securite is the mother of
negligence. But yet there is a good Se-
cure which procedeth from a good and
a pure consciencie wherof Salomon be-
aryth wptnesse in the .xv. chapytre of his
prouerbes sayng. An assured mynde is
as it were a continuall feste. There is
another maner of Securite that is pe-
ryllous and comyth by reason of errour
and lacke of aduysenēt or consideraciō.
And that is where a mā takyth no hede
of hymselfe when he is in ieperdy / ne
remembryth how he walketh i the myd-
des of the deuyles calthrop and snarcs
nor that he offendyth god greuously ma-
ny wayes / nor caryth not whyther he
deserue loue or hate/whyther he be pre-
destinate and reprob/whyther he shal
be sauyd or euellastyngly condemnid/
of the which most dampnable and dan-
gerous Securite it is mencioned in the
There

30uer. 15.

ecclia. 7.

vii. chapytre of Ecclesiastes in this wyse

The preface

There be of the wycked wyse that be as
presumptuous as if they had broughte
instely. So that this presumption and
also negligence growe and sprynge out
of one rote / and so it makyth no great
matter though one synne haue his be-
gynnyng of diuers. Let vs therefore be
berely wyse / diligent / carefull / and cir-
cumspecte / as creatures hauninge eyes
on euery syde. And let vs set our hartes
vpon oure iorney lyke as the prophete
Aggeus monyeth vs / that we tourne
not into the waye of synne / lest we sore
after fall into the tormetys of hell. And
let vs ponder and and fulfyll the sayeng
of the scripture which is this: Blessed is
that man that is alway careful / for I
haue fearyd god lyke as I wold wayes
of the see ragynge vpon me. wherupon
holy Job sayth these wordes. when I
remembre god I am strepen with feare
And also I was tymorous in all my
workes lorde / for I knowe that thou
wylt spare / when I offende / for a wyse
man castyth the worst in all thyng / be-
cause he is vncertayn and in doute why
ther his actes do procede of charite / and
whyther he please god or not And for as
much as it is a dreadfull thyng to fall

Ami. into

The preface

into the handes of the lyving god / the
whiche is terrible in his iudgements
vpon the sonnes of men wherof also we
are vncertaine and ignorant what he
hath determined of vs in the secretes of
his presence or knowledge / and finally
what shall becom of vs: let vs then (all
negligence layed a part) studie to serue
hym alwayes with feare and reuerence/
and so doyng we may be sure to truste
on the best / but if we do our worke neg-
lygently / we shall perishe with those of
whom the pphete speaketh. They that
swaue from thy commaundementes
shall perishe. These thynges I haue
touched bresly of the feare of god / and
eschewyng negligence because in this
worke folowynge I do intende specially
to intreate of certayne matters conce-
rnyng the good education and lyving
of religious persones or regulars / that
is to wpte of such as are bounde to any
rule or ordre certayne / thestate of whō
(alas the more ppte) is fallen to great
rupne and decaye / ye and in maner vn-
to extreme misordre / neuertheles amōg
them there are many good men that
with the bread of god are mouyd vnto
perfyte lyving. Amōg whom also there
are

The preface.

are manye that I loue tenderly / the
whiche haue oftentimes disclosed vnto
me the charite of theyr hartes / for
whose sake I haue wryten this
booke / wherfore (by the grace
and helpe of god) I shall
touche this matties
as groundly and
as substan-
cially as
I can
possi-
ble.



The Table.

I Here followeth a table of the articles
conteyned in the treatyse folowynge.

Of the original institution & spasse
begynnyng of religious or regulars per
sons. **The first article.**

A confirmation of thynges towched in
the first article / by the wordes of holy
fathers & why many of the church
are called clerkes. And wherfore they
lyvynge be gyften them. And whither
they maye lawfully haue propertie in
goodes or no. **The. ii. article.**

For what cōsideracion all religious
persones and clerkes / are principally
bounde to lyue veridically / geuyng good
example in chastite and humilite.

The. iii. article.

Of such thynges as regulars or re-
ligious men / and clerkes are specially
bounden to observe. **The. iiii. article.**

Why clerkes and regulars ought to
weare no weapon neither to fyght / nor
use to set or trymme thop: here / nor yet
to be blurers. **The. v. article.**

For what cause regulars are bound
especially to folow chastite of body / and
clennes of mynd / & therfore they ought
not to haunt the cloystres of nonnes /
nor

The Table.
nor entre in to theyr houses.

The. iii. article.
Of sobrynes to be obseruyd of regulars and of all surtet ryot or drunkennes to be of them auoyded.

The. vii. article.
Howe it is prohibyt to all clerkes & mynystres of the church to occupye any marchaundysse or to exerceyse any tem; porall offyces or cheyshaunce.

The. viii. article.
For what cause clerkes regulars and other constituti in holy ordres ought to refrayn from mynstrelles/ Jesters/and byllardes/tanerns/and che/the play of cardes and dysse.

The. ix. article.
An instruction of diuers holsom consyderacions / wherby we may percepue that all christen people/especially mynystres of the church are bound to dyspse all vanite and superfluite of playes/dissportes/and othe bayne delectacions.

The. x. article.
Of conuenient appayrell for mynystres of the churehe / especially of regulars and of theyr manyfolde excesse in garmentes / and of the desyre therof to be auoyded.

The. xi. article.
That in nowyse women may dwell with regulars or mynystres of p^e church

constitute in holy ordres/except they be
very olde & nere of kyndred. The. xii. article.

¶ That chastite of body and clennes of
hert do principally become prestes and
regulars. The. xiii. article.

¶ Of the peryll and improuidence of
prestes and regulars dwellinge with
women/ gatheryd out of the sayenges
of many noble men. The. xiiii. article.

¶ Of the same matter it apperpyth in
the reuelacions of S. Katerine the
virgen of Denys and also of the holy
wydowe S. Bugide. The. xv. article.

¶ That regulars & all men constitute
in holy ordres are bound to be vertuous
and holy gatheryd out of the sayeng of
holy Dionysius. The. xvi. article.

¶ Of the qualite of regulars gatheryd
out of the sayenges of S. Bernard.

The. xvi. article.

¶ Of the most strypte and terrible iud-
gement of god vpon clerkes had out of
the wordes of glorious saynt Bernard.

The. xviii. article.

¶ Howe they ought to pray/ syng/ and
say the seruice of almyghty god.

The. xix. article.

¶ Whether descanthe may be commenda-
ble in diuine seruice/ & of certayne thyn-
gs which ought to be eschewed in song.
The. xx. article.

C Agaynste some that wolde be excu-
syd from the obseruance of such thynges
as regulars are specially bound to
do sayng that the dignite of the church
requyrez none other fashyō than hath
ben vsyd in tymes passyd. The. xxi. ar.

C Of the daungere that is in pluralite
of benefices. The. xxii. article.

C Howe prestes and such as are of the
clergie are bounde to kepe hospitalite.

The. xxiii. article.

C Whyther religious and spiritual per-
sones that are able to fynde themselves
of theyr owne patrimonye and sub-
staunce / maye lawfully conuerthe the
goodes of the churche vnto theyr owne
vses. The. xxiiii. article.

C What maner of man a prelate/dean/
or a heu and ruler of religious folke /
ought to be. The. xxv. article.

C Agaynst pryde & exesse in buyldyng.
The. xxvi. article.

C Of certayne auncient lawes for the
abaullyng of pluralitees of benefyce / in
the which no dispensacyō is admyttable
as moche as concernyth the naturall
lawe of them. The. xxvii. article.

C An exhortation vnto all clerkes & re-
ligious men. The. xxviii. article.

C Thus endyth the Table.

The lyfe
C Of the originall institution and
of the fyrste begynnyng of religi-
gious / and regular
persones .

The fyrste article.

The holy euangelist Luke
in the fourth chapter of
the Actes of the Apostles
declaryth / howe in
the fyrste begynnyng of
the church (the holy
ghost beyng sent from aboue) the vni-
uersall congregation of saythfull peo-
ple in Iherusalem dyd lyue in comen
hauyng no property in any thyng . In
those dayes subsistace was tempred in
euery man accordyng to theyr necessitys
the which lyfe endured among them so
long as the blessed Apostles were they
and caryd them as saythfull people / yet
scruely whan the Apostles with that de-
uoute James the lesse (at that tyme be-
yng president of the church) were from
them departed / yet notwithstanding
that most deuoute and seruent tyminge
in comen for a certayne space endured.
But after what beleuers in Christes
sayth beganne to encrease thorough
out

of preſhes.

out all Iury / Salpice / and Damages /
many thouſandes began to be regenerate in Chriſte / than could not that tyte
in comyn be well obſerued of all men.
The great ſeruour alſo of theſe tyte deuotion began to vanyſhe alwayes . And
the hotenes of the bloud of our ſauour
Chriſt began in pceſſe of tyme to waxe
colde in the hartes of the more parte of
men. In ſo much that the moſt parte of
ſuch faythfull people that were conuer-
tyd of the Iewes as of the paynymys
to obteygne a properte in goodes to be
contentyd to be obedient vnto theſe ru-
lers. But for all that many callenge to
theſe remembraunce theſe tyte deuo-
tion and conuerſacion / beyng inflampd
by the inſpyrate operation of the holy
ghoſt aboue / with a great hate and ſer-
uent loue of perfectiō and pouerte / toke
vpon them agayne that indifferent tyte
in comen. And ſerther they dyd renewe
the inſtitucyons of the Apoſtles / in the
whiche to the entente they myght the
more frely and ſpedely procede / they ſe-
uerd themſelfe from the other fayth-
full people of god / and began to inha-
bite in ſuburbes and other ſecrete and
ſolitary places / lpyng not onely in
comen

The last

conueniently they: substance / but also
abstynynge from marriage corporally
forsaynynge they: parentes and kynde
folk / leuyng they: soules vnder holy obe
dience accordyng to the gostly counsell
of our layour Christ. After which fast
thou the religious yle had his fyste
beginnyng / as Callianus out of the
wordes of a certayn Abbot / callyd Pias
mon in the secound volume of collatoun
the word is large. And as the same man
wryteth in the secounde boke of the
rule of holy fathers howe in Alexan
dria certayne welldisposed regular peo
ple were institute and ordeyned by the
holy euangelyst Marke / which dyd not
only lyue after the institucions of the
Apostles in comyn / but they addyd the
into moche more and hyer deuocion as
abstynce with other colde hard & perpe
tull lyfe euermore gyuen to prayer and
contemplacyon. In so moche that as wel
the Jewes as paynyms dyd meteunple
therat. They were also so incessantly
gyuen bothe nyght and day to redyng
and also to hande labour that scanty
the secound or thyrde day the appetyte
of meate came in they: remembrance.
Furthermoze that thyng that holy Je
rome

of preachers

come in the booke of noble men swelwth
agreyth with the same sayenge thus.
The euangelist Marke the first pre-
cher of the sayth of Christ vnto the peo-
ple of Alexandria / byd institute and or-
dyne a church there where so great let-
nyng and chastite of lyfe was / to the en-
tent that he myght prouoke the vniuers-
sall folowers of Christe to his example.
And further he sayd y^t Philo the mosse
eloquent of the Jewes which occupied
hymselfe in the prayse and laude of our
saythfull people as it appereth in the
booke that he wrote of the first church
of the euangelist Marke at the cyte of
Alexandria / he assymyd also that suche
christen beleuers were not onely there /
but also in many other prouynces / cal-
lyng theyr houses and mansion places /
monasteries / wherby it appereth that
such was the church of y^e first beleuers
in Christe which we call now monkes.
And such as the holy euangeliste Luke
doth reherce that were first beleuers in
Ierusalem. Also the same Philo made
a certayne booke of the lyfe contempla-
tyue / wherein he sayth / that the first dis-
ciples of the euangeliste Marke were
euer gyven to contemplacion & prayer.

B. Jura

The lyfe

Furthermore of the treatise of this mat-
 ter / ye shall haue this followinge. The
 leges of the institution of holy monasties
 in his booke be Ecclesiastical hierarchias
 For there the same holy man describeth
 howe the maner and appoynted custome
 of consecration of monkes in the tyme
 of the Apostles / and by the foundation
 of the church was very deuoute. More-
 ouer such as shewyd themselves from
 the companie of faythfull people that
 obeyed preceptes of gooden benedict
 ded into two kyndes. For some toke
 vpon them the profession of religouse
 and solitary lyfe. And some truly con-
 uerted among secular men / byd hum-
 ble set vnto to the congregacion in
 the church / lypinge vnder the gouer-
 naunce of holy byshoppes. For why the
 deuoute byshoppes that were at that tyme
 calld and toyned vnto them deuoute
 faythfull and seruyd people that were
 theyr household seruantes or such well
 dysposed persones / as were dwellinge
 nyght to theyr houses / & suche as ladde
 that holy lyfe in comyn / accordyng to
 the institutions of the Apostles before
 reherced with many deuoute addicions
 and obseruaunce / whiche to them were
 shewyd

of prestes.

They by holy byshopps / wold clerkes
 they were. And applied themselves to
 the laudes of god as byshopps dyd / op-
 syng at mydnyght or some after duelys
 to celebrate thei diuine scrupce / that
 ought to be done in the nyght and eke
 in the mornynge. Notwithstandynge
 they dyd not make that colomne of wises
 which be requisite to euery religious
 monkes do now adayes. For why they
 seme to be / but the sprynges and begyn-
 ners of the lyte and calling of regulars
 which whan it chauncyd that they could
 not all inhabite with holy byshoppes /
 they were distributed into other deuout
 places that be callyd colleges beyng vnder
 the gouernaunce of byshoppes / and
 haupnge a meane rulle callyd a deane /
 which places also were namyd monas-
 teries / and had in them one fraytour /
 and one doctour. They were at that
 tyme diligently gyven to diuine obser-
 uances and obedience / bitterly auoy-
 dyng all poyntes of uncleannes and in-
 continencie. wherupon Pope Cle-
 ment in his fourthe Epylle wrote
 vnto his well belouyd bretherne and
 vnto his scholysfelowys of Ierusalem

B. ii. dwelling

The lyfe

dwellynge to gether with his brother
lord brother and byshop after this ma-
ner folowynge. Clement the byshop sen-
dyth you gretyng. ec. A lyfa in comyn
to all men / and especyally to clerkes is
very necessary. And principally to them
that desyre to be militaunt in the church
of god without rebuke or shame. And
such as do coueyte to folowe the lyfe of
the Apostles and theyr disciples. And
for this cause we commaunde you to
folowe and obey theyr doctrine and ex-
ample. Furthermore for this purpose
saint Jerome sayd vnto one Nepotian/
as hereafter folowyth. A clerke he saith
ought so to behaue hymselfe / that god
may bothe possesse hym. And that he
may possesse god. And in so muche that
it is wyrtten. God is my part / he ought
to possesse nothing but god onely. wher-
fore if he possesse any thyng besydes
god he shall not haue his part with god
as for example. If a man possesse gold
syluer / possessions / or other householde
stuffe / it behouyth not y^t our lord shuld
be comparyd to suche partes. Of this
matter in lyke maner in the. xii. chapi-
tre of the decrees more evidently it ap-
peryth / wherupon therof wyrteth sayng
Jerome

of presten.

Jerome agayne sayeng thus. There be
two kyndes & maners of Christen peo-
ple/ wherof one is that maner of people
that be onely set and applyed to diuine
seruyce and gauen to contemplacion &
prayer and suche an thyng is most con-
uenient to retrayning from the troyblous
encomberaunce of temporall and wordly
thynges / as clerkes and other deuoute
and dedicate people to god which beyng
contentyd with a pore and symple ly-
uynge/bothe of sustynance and also clo-
thyng haupyng no properte of goodes
amonge them / but vsyng all thyng in
comen.

Hereafter folowyth the confirma-
cion of the foresayd lyfe in comen out of
sayenges of holy fathers and why they
be callyd clerkes. And wherfore they
haue appendes gauen to them to fynd
them. And whether they may lawfully
haue properties of goodes or no.

The secound article.

The holy doctour and prelate Isi-
dorus in the seuenth boke of his
Ethymologyes dyscussyth this
worde clerke in this maner of wyse. I
suppose that it is callyd clergye / and
that they be callyd clerks / because S.
B.iii. Mathie

Mathe (which was spelle ordeyned by
the Apostles) I can and was cleere
to his dignite by calling of idles / ynn
whiche some persones without holy or
dres haue by callid Clerici in Englysh
Clerkys (and who sayth) mentallid vnto
to spiritual dignities by the lotte of god
des wyl? for that wyrd Glos is as
moche to say in Englysh as wyl of ho
urage. And therfore they are callid cle
rici or clerkys / by cause they are of the
lot & inheritance of god / or els by cause
they haue god to theyr lot & inheritance
or by cause god hath his lot & inheritance
in them. But generally all such are cal
lid clerkys that minstre & do scruple in
the church of Christ / whose names & de
grees be such. Bishop / coler / subdeane /
deane / prest / bishop. And furthermore
as Gratianus wynglyth the degrees
of the hyer and lower sorte of prestes in
the newe testamēt toke his begynnyng
immediatly from Christ / whiche spelle
ordeyned the. xii. Apostles as chiefe &
hyeghest prestes. And the thre score and
xii. disciples as lower prestes. But he
chole the blessed Peter to be his princi
cipall and hed preste. In so moche as he
deliuered vnto hym the keys of the
kyngdom of heuyn for al them & before
all them, And Christ of hymselfe beynge

calld Petra (whiche is a very stone or
roche) gaue vnto hym the name of pe-
ter. The Apostles folowinge the same
fashyon / in euery cytye ordeyned bothe
pistres & byshopes. Also we rede & fynde
that the decanes were ordeyned by the
Apostles. But other antient ordres as
brect/palce / subdecane & other / in pro-
cess of tyme were institute by y^e church
wherupon as Raymundus / Ioannes /
Giles / and other do testifye temporall
goodes & possessions were therfore by the
lay people gyue vnto the church / so that
forbye cause that secular men haue no les-
son to conuynce and euermore apply them-
selve to prayer & diuine seruyce / they be-
cyme many times & churches of the church /
shuld supply y^e chymes of the lay people
in prayeng / wyppering / & satisfyeng for
them by whose almes dedes & reward they
be founde & upholden / but now in con-
fession as it hath appere / not onely in the
tyme of the first begynning of y^e church
but also many yeres afterwarde / that pri-
ests & regulars myght in no wyse haue
properte of goodes / but vlyd the selfe to
one scapour & one worstour / which after-
ward by dispensaciō or other wyse was
chaunged after / such tyme as the church
fell to lepe moste lamentable greatly be-
wapyng tyme & decay both in the hede

The lyte
and also in the membyes of the church.
The which we haue great neede to pray
to almyghty god / that he of his goodnes
wolde wouchesaufe to restore vnto the
olde moste laudable orde and maner.
For whyp / howe many maner of abho-
minable vyces do and dailye wyll crye
and cryng by the reason of the lacke of
lpyngte in comen/in one straitour/and
one doctour/it is more evidently shewyd
by experience / than any tonge can ex-
presse.

¶ For what cause regulars are bound
to lyue verye actiuosly full of good ex-
ample chastyte and meke.

The thyrde article.
Like as the lawe of the gospell was
to vs deliuered by the only begott
sonne of god / the lawe of charite &
vertue / the lawe also of all perfection/
techyng vs to despyse and contempne
all fleshly and worldly thynges & only
to be affectionate & encremore despyous
of spirituall/godly / and heuently thyng-
es/incessantly gyue to the euerylastyng
and immutable god with a pure and
frequent harte and mynde. Sayn so all
christen people especially aboue all other
nations in the worlde ought to be chari-
table

of preste:

table / mercyfull / ghostly / holy / full of
good example / patient / meke / chaste / so-
ber and perfect / and otherwys they are
not worthy to be callyd the churche peo-
ple of Christ. It is not sufficient for the
to folowe Christ by fard only / but it
is very necessary to the helth & holsome
callung of a churche man to folowe his
lorde god Iesus Christ / by the due ob-
servaunce of his commaundementes by
exercyse of vertue / and by suche maner
of lyfe as shall please god. As our lorde
and sayour hymselfe knowledgyth /
sayenge thus. wherfore say ye vnto me
lorde / lorde / doyng not that thyng that
I commaunde you / wherby it may be
percepyd that who so ever transgress-
yth the preceptes of god / baynly & vn-
worthly namyth hym lorde. For the
same purpose thus he sayeth agayne.
Every man that sayeth vnto me lorde /
lord / shall not entre into the kyngdome
of heuen / but he that dothe the wyll of
my father that is in heu. Also he saith
agayne in this maner. They that be
the people of Christ that is to say per-
teynyng to Christ as his true seruants
and mynstres haue mortified and
ponyshed theyr fleshe with abstinence

B. v. from

The lyte

from vice and concupiscence. Therefore christen men are bound to lyue after the fashion of Christe/ that is to lyue/ to imitate and folowe christ in all charactes/ humylyte/ patience/ sobrienes/ and chastite/ and etc. they be callyd christen men the more for theyr damnacion. And for that cause the Apostle Johan sayth in this wyse, whoso sayth that he lyue reuyneth in Christe/ he is behoupyd to walke as Christ walkyd. Besyd this/ howe/ betterly. holyst and purely a man ought to obey and serue god/ it is clere/ is expessed in the sayeng of the Apostle James shewing thus/ who so euer hath falslyd and performed all the law/ offending but in one paynte he is iudged guiltye in the hyle. Behold therefore how narrowe the way of helth is/ wherfor one worde we suffer eternall damnacion. And as the trewth witnesseth/ he that calleth his brother soule/ shall be gyfte of the paynes of hell. In yf he sayle he that slaundereth one of these innocentes receiveth the horrible tormentes of hell/ the same lordes opimon. And also he that offendeth one of the lytell ones that beleuen in men/ it is requysite that a myllstone be hanged about his necke/ and

of prelates

and thus be doth in the bottome of
 the sea. For we the makers of our law
 commaundyd all men that be liege
 in law to do as he sayth hereafter folow
 ynge. Love your enemyes/do good un
 to them that hate you/and pray for the
 that doo persecute and slander you.
 Whose hard shyngea truly and with
 many other lythel thinges to us sayth
 that chaste man as further more the byer
 in that and degree that a man be/the
 more and greater schawdes that his
 chastyte is to haue so much the more is
 he bound to a vertuose lyfe for this. The
 more to any man idoggeth the more of
 hym is askyd agayne. Therefore who so
 be a regular / he is not onely bounde to
 the preceptes of the lawe in the gospell
 before touched: but also to those thyng
 es that are especially to regulars en
 tynd. And verily such as be not onely
 regulars / but constitute in any maner
 of holy orde / are bounde besydes the
 thynges afoze reherced / vnto suche
 thynges as is commaunded to all
 them that be constitute in the same
 orde / wherefore if he be a prelate or a
 pastoure / that is to saye a fether of
 christen

The first

christ people with ghostly robe in that
he hath taken upon hym the cure and
charge of soules / that he is surely bound
to many more hyer thynges than before
expressed
¶ Nowe saying therfore it is sayd that
the ministers of the church: and regula
res be therfore callid clerkes / for the
cause they be especiall the bot / parte in
heritage of god / as men onely dedicate
and deputed to diuine graces than it is
open vnto vs / that they are bounde to
lyue so excellently / that they may be able ad
uocates may not obteyne any right / or
dominion in them / of the godly honour /
but that all tymes with a substantiall
pure fidelite they may ptepyne to god
And agayn it is sayd that a temporal gress
were assigned by the lay people vnto
the clerkes and regulars / to the extent
that they shuld not onely minister vnto
almighty god for they shuld welthe
preservation / but also in the place and
steede of the lay people: here they shulde
pray and minister / and also pacifye and
reconsyle that ryghtwys iudge: not
onely to themselves / but also to them by
whose appendes they lyue. They are
bounde to reconsyle themselves & agayne
to come

of prestes.

As come to the fauour of god / if somtyme
they fortune to lese it. And also of ryght
they ought to aply. And intently gyue
themselve to the laude of god in theyr
prayer and scrupce / bothe for them selfe
and also for theyr foundarys and bene-
factours. wherby it appereth howe
purely and vertuously they are bounde
to lyeve / that by the reason of the fulnes
of theyr vertue and the abundaunce of
theyr mercy they maye helpe & succour
theyr frendes and neyghbours as well
onlye as ded. Therfore such regular &
ordinary houres with other prayers /
laudes / and psalmodyes / wherto they
are bounde ought of them to be done &
performed with great diligence. And no
dought but they ought to behaue them
selfe as worthy mynstres / and men con-
tentyd to do the scrupce of god / pronou-
ncyng it distinctly solitarily and deuote-
ly. Otherwysc they haue no ryght in
any goodes or substaunce of the chur-
ches / nother in the heritage of Christe /
nor yet in the appendes or rewardes of
the souldiars of god. As the profunde
lernyd doctour Guilhelmus Parisien-
sis wytnessyth in many places. Alricus
also in his boke namyd summa. Ray-
mundus

mundus/ But and as Joannes/ whether
be of the same opinion/

T Of such thynges as are specially
encomendyd to regulars.

T Mediat. at.

Like as Ambrosius sayth that cler-
gical be namyd by this geue name
necesse/ which is in Englyshe a rule
for bycause they be especially of the law
of god/ & god is there heritage/ & pith
so these regulars be called of these gude
word/danon/ in Latyne/ regula/ in the
glysh a rule. And as Gratiaunce sayth
it is callyd a rule/ for that that it keepeth
feythful/ not at any tyme wavereth away
as some men sayen/ it is callyd a rule
for that that it ruleth or governeth.
And the wyse the very fashion of luyng
discretely/ or els for bycause it doth not
swyche that thyng that is rule dis-
posyd or out of the way. Clerkes there-
fore be namyd regulars for bycause they
be bound to lve there lyfe discretely and
in good rule/ and byng all inclination
to vice. And clerly passyng by pathes
of vertue/ vnto blyssydnes/ accordyng
vnto the institutions of holy fathers to
them

of prestes.

them before ordeyned. But although
of the generall counsell / by hygher bps.
hopps / doctours / and noble prelates.
A Jerome / Augustine / Gregoꝝ / and
Andore many thynges were institute to
be obserued of the regulars which in the
decree therof made be solwchyd and ex-
pressyd / yet notwithstanding these pre-
ceptes (as many as be sufficient for our
purpose) are compedioussly gatheryd to-
gether in the begynnynge of the thyrde
booke of decretalles / wherein amonges
other it is thus sayd and commaundyd.
Clerkes that bere weppn and be us-
urats / let them be excommunicate. If
any of the clerkes do use to set theyr bus-
shes oꝛ here / let them be accurst. If any
of the clerkes do presumptuously haunt
the monasteryes of nounces without a
manifest and reasonable occasion / fyrst
he shalbe correctyd by the byshop / and
if he wyll not ceasse / he shall clerly be
dylcharged of his offyce in the churche.
Fether Innocentius the thyrde in a
generall counsell sayd that. To the en-
tent that both the actes and condicions
of clerkes maye be better refoꝛmyd.
And that they all may lyue contynent-
ly and chasty / especyally suche as ben
con-

The lyfe

constitute in holy ordres utterly eschewynge vyce and voluptuousnes / & that they may mynistr & serue in the lyghte of god with a pure hart and chaste body. And to the entente that hope of pardon shall not encourage them to offende / we ordeyne / that who come euer hereafter be founden or taken corrupted with the vice of incontynencie (as he hath offended more or lesse) so that he be punished accordynge to the holy regular ordres / which we commaunde more effectuously & strenghtly to be kepte that such as the feare of god can not reuoke from synne. At the least wyse they may be compelled to forsake it by temporal punishment / that is to suspende them from theyr offyces / and also to take from the theyr benefytes of the church. Furthermore all clerkes shulde diligently absteyne from surfettes and dronkenes. wherfor they shuld moderatly vse wyne And no man shuld be prouoked to drynke for dronkenes banysyth a man from his wyt and discrecion. And also encourage a man to the pleasure of the body. Therefore we haue decreed that such abusion must utterly be forsaken / and that in all partes they shulde be bounde to
drynke

of prestes .

bynke after a moderate fashyon . And
if any of them in these foresayd thynges
be founde culpable (excepte he beyng of
his superiour admonyshe wythe recon-
syled) he shalbe from his offyce and bene-
fyce suspendyd . And clerkes shall not ex-
erceyse worldly offyces / nor vse mar-
chandise / especially such as be vn honest .
They shall not gyue audience to mys-
trellers / Jesters / & dyscardes . Let them
chese anye tawerns / excepte it be in
case of necessity / as a man purposyd in
a iorney . They may not play at cardes /
nor at dyce / nor vse no suche maner of
gamps . They crownes muste haue
accordyngly . And also they muste dily-
gently exerceyse themselves in all offyces
of the church with all other good & ver-
tuous studyes . They upper garmentes
ought to be close / and not to longe or to
shorte . They ought also in nowyse to
weare any redb clothe / or grene weltyd
seups / or shewys / bypdes / or sadels gilt
no laces / nor lachettes garnyshe with
syluer or golde / nor yet any rynges / ex-
cept it be such as be allowyd by dignite
of theyr offyce . Also it is commaunded
that no preste kepe any womē by whom
he may be suspected . For if any preste /

L. Deane/

The lyfe

deane or subdeane beyng suspectyd of fornication with any woman / be after the secounde or thyrde warnynge / founde with her in communication / or conuersant with her in any maner of wyse: immediatly after let hym be excommunicate / for women be not permytted to dwell with clerkes / except they be suche maner of persons / in whom the lawe of nature wyll not suffice any defaulte to be suspected. Clerkes may vse no playes / toyes / nor gamynges in the churche. The goodes of clerkes shulde be forthe in comyn / they shulde eate in one house / and slepe vnder one couerynge. Marke therfore / how here it is manifest i what good ordre / deuotion / and example the lyf of regulars somtyme hath byn. And how of ryght it ought now to be. Therfore let them be fearfull / and let them gyue no confidence to any vnrasonable dispensacion / which is the very destruction of all vertuose lyuynge. And let them take no regarde vnto custumed lybertye / for that is but a meane to corrupte a perfyte lyfe / and truely very necessarye / or apparaunt profyte is the mother or originall begynnyng of dispensacions / by whom they vicious conuersacion

of prestes.

It is extolp'd/as hygh and holy bys-
shoppes/Leo / and Gelasius with many
other pryncpall doctours doo asserme/
but nowe consequently / some of these
thynges shalbe more especially declared.

Why clerkes or regulars ought
to bere no maner of weapon/
nor to fyght/nor vse to set
theyr here/nor yet to
be vsurers.

The. v. article.



It is conuenient(as it appe-
reth) that all mynystres/cler-
kes/ or regulars of the chur-
che shuld themselves applye to
the seruyce of god/ that is to
say/they shuld be gyuen to prayer & con-
templaciō. And to the laude and prayse
of theyr maker. And to desyre god to be
mercifull / as well to them / as to other
theyr frendys & neyghbours / by whose
exhibition and stypendes they are by-
holden and susteyned. And seynge that
the exerceyse of warre (wherein the in-
quietnes & trouble of māns hart do espe-
cially remayne) shuld be a great impedi-
ment against these good actes to be done/

L.ii. ther

The lyfe

therfore warre is forbydden them aswel
as marchaundyse / for that cause they
ought not to bere wepon / lest they shuld
be prouokyd to fyght / & least they shulde
shewe themselves as men redy to fyght &
lest they shuld quarrell with other men.
But for all that if they iorney by any
dangerous places / than may they were
necessaie weapons to fere theyr ene-
myes / and themselves moderately to de-
fende with harmeles defence / moreover
where as regulars are deputed to serue
the altare / wherein the passion of Christ
is represented in the sacrament / there is
good cause why they are prohibyted to
shed blood / but rather are bound to shed
theyr owne blood for the loue of Christ
and ryghtwysnes. Therfore this sayng
of the Apostle / of them is to be obseruyd
Strepe ye not with wordes / for it is to
no purpose profytable / but to the sub-
uersion of the hearers . Also further he
sayth thus . If any man be supposed full
of debate / we and the church of god wyl
haue no suche compaignye . And therfore
scripture saith . That mā is to be cōmē-
dyd / that conuayeth hymselfe from de-
bate and strepe . And furthermore they
ought to be armyd with spirituall de-
fence

of prestes.

first to p^remyle and respyt agaynst the
er^r mpes of they^r helth. And to such de-
fence they ought to induce the laie peo-
ple by they^r example. Of this matter p^r
holy father saynt Ambrose / in his boke
callyd de officiis / and also in other pla-
ces wrote many thynges. In the decre
also many thynges were induced to this
purpose. For certaynly it was institute
at a generall counsell / that what clerke
so euer had dyed in fyghtyng skoldyng/
or other games of the gentyles/shulde be
prayed for / nother in oblation / nother
in any oryson/or prayer / but shulde fall
into the handes of the iudge / yet not
withstandyng he shulde be buryed. Also
it was ordeyned in the counsell of To-
lytan / that clerkes bepyng weapon ryos-
tously shulde lese the degre of they^r or-
dre / and be hanyshed for euer in to mo-
nasteryes / lyke wyle it is red in the ac-
tes of the counsell of Melde. That none
of the clergie shuld take vpon them wea-
pons of defence / nother i any wyle shuld
go armpd / but the name of they^r profes-
sion they shuld persourme both with re-
ligouse maners / & also with religious
habyte. The which thyng if they despy-
sed / they shulde be greuously correctyd /

L.iii. as fyist

The lyfe

As fyrst to leſe theyr propre degrees/ and
further to be taken as extreme deſpy-
ſers of the holy canons/ and alſo curſyd
corrupters of the auctorite of the church
for they can not ſerue both god and the
worlde. Furthermore they ought bitter-
ly to auoyde all worldly glorie/ and ge-
nerallie all thyng that prouoketh a
man to incline to the pleaſure of the bo-
dy/ with all other vayne curioſities. Cer-
taine preceptes agreeable with the ſame
be eſpecially enioyned by the Apoſtles/
ſayng thus. In no wyſe be ye conforma-
ble to this worlde/ but be you reſormpd
with the ſpirit of diſcretion wherby he
meaneth that they oughte to abhorre &
auoyde the ſettinge of theyr buſhes the
comlynce of theyr locks the trimming
of theyr beards/ in ſo much that it is pro-
hibyte that women ſhulde be attyrd in
here/ and as Albertus wrote vpon Job/
ſayeng thus: Much thynges do prouoke
concuſſence/ for clerkes are comman-
ded to be garnyſhed both inwardly and
outwardly with a veſtment of vertue/
and alſo they ſhuld be inwardly reſplen-
dent and ſhynnyng in good maners / ſo
that they myght procede honeſtly/ being
gouerned

gouernyd in all theyr syght & sensys / Be
cause this vsurie is most greatly prohi-
byd not onely to them / but also to the
vniuersall kynd of faythful people / in so
muche that as the philosophour graunt-
tyth. Usurie is a thyng moste principall
agaynste nature. And as the prophete
Dauid describeth a iuste man / thus he
sayth: He lent not his money to vsurie.
And as Tymothew writyth. A uygard is
a mother of the gospel / muche more an
vsurer / & especially a clerke whom it be-
comyth to be more spirituall & vertuous
than a lay mā / for as S. Jerome sayth /
it is the moste vehement destruction of
the church / whan lay men be better dis-
posed then clerkes. And vsurie truly
with symonye be two the most mysche-
nous branches of auarice / wherupon
S. Iulius writyth in this maner of wyse
It is cōtayned in the law of holy fathers
that prestes / clerkes / or regulars shulde
fener thēself frō al bulgare & secular lyf /
absteynyng alwayes frō the voluptuous
desires of the worlde & che of the fleche /
they may in no wyse gūet hēself to vsu-
rie / they must hate & abhorre the occasiō
of all suche folwe lucre & fraude / yf they
must auoyde & eschewe the affectiō of mo-
ney as though it were a hendlyng of all

L.iii. (other byccs.

The lyfe

For what cause regulars are bound
especially to folow chastyte of body and
clennes of mynd / & therfore they ought
not to haunte the cloystres of nōnes / nor
to entre into theyr houses.

The. vi. article.

This thyng hath byn by many ho
ly and hyghe byshops / many ge
nerall counsailes / and many pro
uyncall constitucyons moſte eſpecially /
moſte ſtrongly / and moſte oftentymes /
enioyned and commaunded vnto mini
ſters of the church / to all regulars and
men conſtitute and appoynted to holy
ordres that they ſhuld abyſteyne from all
vncleannes / incontynence / and deteſtable
fornicaciō. For in the ſynne of the fleſhe
is the moſte great & manifeſt turpitude
beſtyennes / diſhoneſtie / and fylthynes .
And alſo ſuche maner of vyces in the
clergie / be moſte vehemently rebukyd of
the people / many great vices be to them
annexed and enſynge of them . For
 fyrſte they acqwyze the hate and dys
dayne of god / than they procure the ig
norauce of all ſpirituall thynges / they
engendre alſo a pcyntfull ſufferaunce of
betrouſe excerciſe / they blynd a many
mynde / and in conſclusion they plucke a
man

of prestes.

man cleane away from the lone and con-
templacion bothe of godly and heuently
thynges. Therfore (in so much that the
holy mysterie of the altare is most pure/
and the sacramentes of the churche be
most cleane and ghostly (especially the sa-
crament of the blessed body of our lord)
it is most vicious and inconuenient that
the ministers of the church and altare/
shulde so precious sacramentes desyle &
corrupte/with that moste foule sylthye
and abhominable synne of the flesh and
bestly concupiscence/ye and to presume
to serue. And to receyue so depe a foun-
tayne of purite & cleannes/with so foule
and corrupt a mouth. And furthermore
syns the tyme of the blessed Apostles/
this moste vile and abhominable vyces
haue byn prohybete vnto clerkes and
ministers of the churche vpon moste
strayte & greuous paynes. The whiche
thyng (to the intent it may be the bet-
ter knowen) I wyl somewhat therof de-
clare. And although that strayte and so
litary lyfe is now (the more pyte great-
ly decayed) yet neuertheles I wyl touch
a lytyl of the statutes and culps of them
that it may appere how vehemently ho-
ly fathers (in whom the inspiration of

L. b. the

The tye

the holy ghoſte / the ſeale of iuſtice / & the
loue of vertue/ byd excellently prynciple)
byd prohibite the vncleannes of clerkes
regulars and preſtes. Accordyng verily
to the rule of the Apoſtles / every man
conſtitute in holy ordres / eſpecially a
preſte/ falling into the ſynne of vncle-
annes / ſhulde be for euer more depofyd /
whiche long tyme after was obſerued for
the ſynne of aduoutrie / as concerninge
penytement / wherof it is conteyned
in the ſeuenth ſynode holden at Aure-
lianne. That if a clerke hath ben con-
uicted of aduoutrie/ or had confeſſed it/
he ſhulde haue ben depofyd from his of-
fice/ and ſo to haue ben commytted vn-
to a monaſtery during his lyfe. And al-
ſo the holy father Pope Clement (as it
is red) made inſtitucyons after the ſame
maner of perpetuall depofyng and pe-
nytement of preſtes doyng fornicacy.
But after that/ in the tyme of pope Sil-
ueſter/ that extreme correccion was ſom-
what mitygate / as touchyng preſtes/
that were penitent and cōſtryte of theyr
owne propre and free wyl/ and ſuch as
ceaſed theyr ſynfull luyng for in the
counſell of Gangara and alſo in the de-
crete/ the. xxviii. diſtinctio it is read/ that
if a

of prestes.

if a preste hath commytted fornicacion/
although he oughte by the ruls of the
Apostles/to be depoyd yet by the aucto-
rite of that blessyd pope Siluester / if he
wyd not contynue in wyce/but refusyd is
and roste agayne of his owne frewyl/
that then he shulde take repentance in
this worlde for the space of ten yeres.
And beyng remouyd from the other bre-
therne by the space of thre monethes/he
shulde be blyd with bred and water / fro
euenyng to euenyng / but in sondayes &
other principall feastes/he shuld be fedd
with a lytyll drynke/fyssh or ryse/with-
out fleshe or blood/without egges/or els
chese/spenge on the grounde nyght and
day despying the mercy of god. Than
whan thre monethes were determyned/
he shulde come forth/but not abrode in
to open places/for feare least/the multi-
tude of good people myght be offendyd
by his euill example. And it is in no
wyse lawfull for a preste to be enioyned
as a lay man to any open penaunce/but
after that he hath perusyd the space
of a yere and an halfe lyuyng with bred
and water / excepte in sondayes & other
principall feastes / in whom he myght

ble wyne

The lyfe

wth hyne/ wth he/ blood/ egges/ and cheere/
 accordyng vnto the^r regular m^{an}ner/
 but the fyfthe pere and an halfe beyng
 synghed/ he myght haue the sacrament
 minystrid to hym to that intent that he
 shulde not dyspayre in god / and that he
 shulde come to peace/ that is to saye / he
 shuld be reconcylid vnto his bretherne/
 and synge psalmes in the quere amonge
 them agayne / yet shulde he not come to
 the ende of the alter / but accordyng to
 the sayeng of blessyd Clement/ he shuld
 minystrer inferior offyces. Than vnto the
 ende of the seuenthe pere/ at all tymes/
 except y^e thre Ester holy dayes/ he shuld
 fast brede & water thre certayn dayes in
 euery weke. But the space of seue peres
 beyng fulfyllid/ if the bretherne among
 whom he repentyd / do comende his pe-
 naunce as worthy and acceptable in the
 syght of god/ than the byshop accordyng
 to the auctorite of blessyd pope Calixt/
 maye hym reuoke vnto his p^{re}stine and
 former honoure. And surely it is to be
 knowen / that by synng one psalter/
 in the secound serpc/ or g^{eu}eng one peny
 to poore folke (if nede be) he may be rede-
 myd after seuen peres ended. Than vn-
 to the ende of the tenth pere there is no
 redemp

of prestes.

redemption / but the syxth teryp muste
nedes be obserued with brede and ma-
ter. But for all this in proces of tyme
this foresayd correction vanyshed. And
was / but meanely obseruyd / as in the
thyrde booke of Decretalles is notified/
where amonges all other it is reportyd
that pope Alexander the thyrde wrote vnto
to a certayn bishop in maner folowynge.
you ought straitly by interdiction and
suspension to correcte clerkes constitute
in holy ordres / that kepe concubynes /
that they maye remoue suche maner of
women out of theyr company / because
no synestre and froward suspicion maye
be had of them. And if any of them re-
sist to suche women / or presume to re-
ceyue them / that then they maye be ac-
cursyd with perpetuall sentence of ex-
communication that other may refrayne
from lyke offences by example of them.
Also the same pope wrote vnto an arch-
bishop of Canterbury on this fashyon
ensuyng. we comaunde you diligently
to exhorthe the clerkes of your iurisdic-
tions that kepe any harlottes within
theyr subdeantries / that they doo them
remoue & in nowyse to vse them agayn.
And if they refuse to forsake them / than
to be

The lyfe

to be suspēdyd from all benefices. And if they be
excommunicat satisfaction. And if they be
pynge suspēdyd, wyl presume to kepe &
retayne such manner of women / then
loke that you remoue them from all ma-
ner of benefices of the church for euer
more. He speaketh agayne in another
ceterall on this wyse. For by cause that
clerkes can not intēd both to theyr plea-
sure and carnall desyres / and also to the
diuine seruyce of the church / therfore for
theyr viciētes they ought to be dischar-
ged of al the benefices of the church. Of
this matter in many decretalles of po-
pes as of Gregorius / Sixtus / Lucius
Innocentius / and other it is evidently
declared. where also this is addyd. Pre-
lates that presume to suffer such manner
of clerkes / especially beyng intreatyd
with money and other temporall com-
modities / shall incurr the same penaltie.
Here of an ordinance in the decree the
fourscore and thyrde distinction is made
on this fashion. If any byshop consent to
the fornication of prestes / deanes / or
clerkes in his diocesse: other for affec-
tion / prayer / or rewarde / or els if he
wyl not pōnysh and correct offenders
by the

of prelates.

by the auctorite of his office: he shalbe
from his office suspendyd. Of the which
sayenge it is also concludyd that a bys-
hop that correctyth not the transgres-
sions of such men: is more worthy to be
callyd a saltpe dogge than a byshope.
I pray you: what meanyth this worde:
consent: Gratianus expoundyth it in
this maner of wyse. He that withstan-
dyth not vyce and errour: consentyth
thereto. Innocentius the pope to the
same sayth. Errour that is not respyd
is allowyd: and trewthe that is not de-
fendyd is oppresyd: and that man is
worthy to be suspectyd of secreete mayn-
tenaunce: that wyll not withstand open
synne. All which thyng may be princi-
pally supposyd of prelates that are bound
to resist vyce: by very ductye of theyr of-
fice. But now seying it standyth in such
myfardye/howe greatly ought we to be-
wyle the abhominacion of the worlde
that now is. Howe much is this misera-
ble & deformed estate of the church to be
lamentyd: in whome other no peny-
shement at all: or els the penyshement
of the purse is extendyd vpon wanton
prelates clerkes and regulars: why
the dayle are permitted to walowe
in theyr

The lyfe

in theyr myscheuous liuynge to a no-
cious occasion and euill example to the
lay people. The regular visitaciō of cler-
kes is to none effecte / for many of them
do so reioyce that they be so exemptyd/
that they may not be correctyd neither
of the deane / nor yet of the byshoppe / the
which is eyn a lyke matter as though
a monke shuld be exemptyd from the cor-
rection of his abbot or priour . ¶ What
maner of thyng is such exemption / whā
agaynst an exemption (moch lesse vnea-
sonable then this) the most holy and il-
luminate father saynte Bernard in his
boke de Consideracionibus wrote sharp-
ly and discretely to pope Eugenius and
the same exemption manye maner of
wyle dyd reprove . And for the same ex-
emption he greatly rebukyd and con-
trollyd the foresayde pope Eugenius
sayng thus . wo be to fylthy & wretched
synners vpon whych / which had leuer
to be reseruyd vnto the most strait and
terrible iudgemente of god / and also to
fall into powre of god cuerlastyng / than
in this present lyfe to be duely correctyd
of theyr prelates / and to obey the rulyes
and decrees of holy fathers / do not such
men seme to be of the nombze of them
that

of prestes.

thrt shall be reprouyd / and moſte ſerred
from eternall blis. Some they not alſo
to be the chyldren of infernall torment/
whom god ſuffereth to lyue accordynge
to the deſyre of theyr hartes / and truſte
in theyr owne fantaſyes. Furthermoze
for bycauſe regulars and all other con-
ſtitute in holy ordres / be conſecrate to
diuine ſeruyce / me thynketh that theyr
fornicacion is ſacrilege. And it is callyd
ſacrilege / for that it corruptyth holy or-
dre / by vnworthy handelynge and myſ-
cheuous abuſynge that thyng that to
god is conſecrate. Therfore they are eſ-
pecially prohibyted to haunte the clo-
ſtres of nonnes / & that vnder the payne
of excommunicaciō they come not within
theyr houſes to the entent that all euill
occaſion of ſacrilege and vicious medde-
lynge with them ſhulde be auoyded / the
which beyng commytted ſhuld be dou-
ble ſacrilege / and alſo a certayne abho-
minable and enoyme aduoutre / bothe
with perſones that haue offeryd them-
ſelfe vnto the heuently ſpouſe beyng pro-
feſſyd and conſecrate / and alſo to enduce
the vnto the tranſgreſſion of ſo ſolemne
a bolwe of chaſtite which they haue pro-
myſed vnto almighty god to be conti-

D nently

The lyfe
mently obseruyd and kept.

Of sobrienes to be obseruyd
regulars and of all surfet ryot
and dyonkenes to be of
them auoyded.

The. vii. article.



It is cunyn as our lord spake/
by the pphete **O**reas. wyne/
dyonkenes/ and womē / that
is to say / fornicacion taketh
away the harte of men/that
is to wyte/it blyndyth theyr mynde and
maketh darke the iudgement of man-
nes reason. And seying it is the best part
of man / to lyue accordyng to the iudge-
ment of reason / than it appereth that
surfet and ryot maye engendre in man
many incomodyttees. For it hurtyth na-
ture / it shorteneth lyfe/it blyndyth vn-
derstandyng/it procuryth many syknes
infirmities and tediousshes/it engendryth
the hatred of god/it encreaseth cnyue/
it makyth a man redy to doo iniurie to
other men / it induceth slogardyse and
neglygēce/it prouokyth aman to vn-
mesurable tryfulles and bablyng/it dis-
closyth also utterly al secretenes of harte
com.

of prestes.

compunction and fere. Therfore it is
not onely prohybte vnto al regulars &
spirituall persons / but vniuersally to all
faythfull chriſten people / and Chriſte
hymſelfe ſayng thus. Take ye hede that
your hartes be not oppreſſyd with ſur-
fet and dronkenes / nor with any other
regard of this worlde. For in concluſion
lyke as glotony doth corrupte y^e mynd
ſo it makyth the bodye to be dyſſo- myd
monſtrous / and depriueth a man from
naturall comlynnes / and alſo from a con-
uenient quantite of body / and that vyle
voluptuousnes of taſte is bought ryght
deere. Therupon ſaynt Bernarde ſayth /
that the pleaſure of the throte that now
adays is ſo muche made of / conteyneth
ſcantly the bredeth of two fyngers / and
yet for the delectacion of ſo litle a part
howe dylgently / howe coſtly / and with
howe great labour do we prepare / but
at length to our great payne. By this
meanes the backes and ſhoulders of men
are ſpredde / and made brode lyke mon-
ſtres / herby the great belyes are not on-
ly fatted / but alſo puffed vp lyke women
with chyld. And whyle the bondys be
not able to bere the fleſhe / many dyuers
dyſeaſes muſte nedes engendre.

D.ii. D with

The lyfe

With both great labour and ery. And is
suche dere and delicious pleasure pre-
pared. Glotony and lechery doo obeye
the pleasure of the fleshe. Surfet & dyon-
kenes is the deuylls chaleys/for whan
a man hath both replenysht his mynde
and stomake Christe in suche a riotous
persone can fynde no place. And lyke as
fyre and water can not be mingled both
to gether/Myght so spirituall and corpo-
rall pleasures can not be sufferyd in one
place. For where Christ perceyvyth sur-
fet of a riotous person in his dymnyng
he wyl not bouchsafe to rewarde hym
with his wyne that are moze swete
than suger or hony/And surely whan p-
curious and delycate dyuetyte of meates
and dymkes hath fully fedde the stomac-
kes of men /there is no voyde pure nor
clene place for heynly fode. why loue
ye voluptuosnes / forsakyng vertue and
helth. Truly for a fowle and bryse swet-
nes and delectacion/ye do procure euer-
lastyng payne and bytternes/so that at
the laste ye wyl despise/as the rych glot-
ton dyd/one droppe of water to quenche
the hete of the fyre of hell / & yet ye shall
not obteyne it. For agayne whom both
the scruent hete of the infernall honger
and

of prestes.

and heuylly the thyrst and other most extreme penythemēt / fume more than a gapnst glottones / whiche do cōuert the necessary sustentacion of pore people into theyr owne pleasures. And playnly as S. Bernard wytnessyth. The fautes of the fleshe / the pleasure of the body / the fulnes of the wombe wyl other leue a man before dethe / or els forsake hym at the poynte of dethe. Than this fleshe of yours shortly afterwarde shalbe deputed to wozmes / the soule shalbe commyttyd to infernall penythemēt / where such be compaynyons in payne as were to gether compaignyons in byce. O thou delicate man that swymmythe in pleasure & ryches / yet in them beyng wrapped thou lokyst euer for thy owne confusion / death / and damnacion. Note what the Apostle saith. The kyngdome of heuyn / is nother mete nor drynke / nother sylke / nor purple / for the rych man habundaunt of these / shall straye descende into hell. O ye delicate & voluptuose persones / whose god is the bely / whiche nor the your hartes and bodye with ryot and lechery / what say yow to this: you do here that mete is ordeyned for the bely and the bely for mete / yet

D.iii. god

The lyfe

god wyl destroy the one with the other/
and yet god shall destroye them bothe.
Therefore let regulars that be almoste
bitterly decayed for lacke of obedyence
vnto holy ruls take hede and feare god
which p^r ryghtwysse iudge saith as here
soloweth. wo be to you that be satis-
fied with fode / for ye shalbe a hungered.
wo be to you ryche men whose onely co-
fort is in your riches. wo be to you that
laughe for ye shal wepe and moerne/dyd
not Judas the Apostle wyte of these
thynges / bomytynge theyr owne confu-
syons / to whom an infernall strome of
darkenes is conseruyd and kepte. wher
sayeth the holy Apostle in this maner.
They be not onely corruptyd & spottyd
in theyr frattes / but also they be spotted
and corruption / for that that in theyr fe-
dyng / manyfolde synnes fallen amonge
them. And lyke as the Apostle wrote to
certayne of the Gentyles that were con-
uertyd sayng thus. Some tyme ye were
darkenes / for in eatyng or feadyng they
do not onely excede in qualite or quan-
tite of meates or drynkes / but also in
bayne superfluous and euill wordes /

Wyll

of prestes.

Wyl not say in sklaunderous knyngthe
and wanton/in topes/tryfulles/playes/
mockes / mowes / dissolucions / losse of
tyme/and moch more heelnes. The pro-
phete Jobell cryeth vnto suche maner
of people, sayenge: Awake ye dronkar-
des / and wepe/and all you that drynke
wyne for plesaunce and swetnes/moyn-
ye / for it shall perperhe out of your mou-
thes / furthermoze of glotonye that by-
cypous mother/solowpthe fowle lechery a
armoze bycypous doughter. Now be not
all saythfull christen people bounde to
lyue straitly in penytent conuersacion
and ferefully in respecte of god aboue.
And the hyer that regulars be consti-
tute in degre and spirituall estate / so
be the more vertuous/sobze/and fearful
than the laze people. Let no man dis-
ceyue hymself for god requyrezth of eue-
ry man that he shall lyue accordynge to
the degre that he is callyd vnto. Be-
sydes this the longer that an euyl cus-
tome is vsyd/the more iniuste and incu-
rable it is. And therfore from the fyrste
foundation of the church/holy & blessed
fathers haue moste straitly and vche-

The lyfe

mently prohibyte the synne of th. A he
glotony/dronkennes / and wantones to
the mynstres of the churche / as of the
same/in the decre many thynges are de
clared. It is red also in the rulyes of the
Apostles/that a byshop/preste/or deane/
gyuen to ryot or dronkenes/ must other
forlake it / or els be condemned and
deposed. A subdeane reader or synger in
the churche doyng the same/must other
ceasse or be expulld from the commun
ion. The same purpose it is brought in/
in the. xxxv. distinction/that especyally
dronkenes shuld be auoyded of clerkes/
for of all other vices it is the noyces
and cherysher. Also in the counsell of A
gathon it was ordeyned / that a clerke
beyng dronke shulde be seuctyd from the
communion/for the space of. xxx. dayes/
or els corporally to be ponyshed. And the
Apostle in lyke maner wyrteth to all
faythfull people and enioyneth them in
this wyse. That they lyue not in gloto
ny & dronkenes. &c. And also regard that
they vse not the despyres of the fleshe.
And agayne / we be dettours vnto the
fleshe / not to that intent that we shulde
lyue after the fleshe / for if we lyue after
the fleshe/ we shold dye.

Another

of prestes.

Anoth'r thing there is wherof the most
holy Peter the Apostle dothe vs aduer-
tise/sayenge thus: welbelouyd frendes/
I beseeche you absteyne from carnall de-
syre/which makyth batayle agaynst the
soule. Further S. Paule sayet (It be-
houyth a byshop to be sobre/chaste/and
not drunken) perceyueyth also to all men
constitute in holy ordres / as the holy fa-
thers Ambrosy & Augustine do wytnesse
bytydes all this/it appereth by the wo-
des of S. Jerome/ howe hard & difficu-
le it is for hym that keepyth not sobre-
nes/to kepe his chastyte. The princes &
minystrs of the church/whiche do ma-
lowe in delicyous pleasure saynyng al
feastes that they kepe chastyte / be (by
the wordes of the prophete) worthy to
be caste out from sayre houses and deli-
cate bankettes / into exterior darkenes/
whiche Jerome sayth further. The glo-
torny of the bely prouokyth lechery/and
puttyth a parte euery good wroke and a
bely boylynge with wyne sone fallyth to
pleasure of the body. For why the bely
of man and the prey members be berpe-
nere one to an other / so that by the ne-
renes of those members ye maye perceyue
the moze redy inclination of vyce. Fur-

D. v. there

The lyfe

thermore as it is mencioned (Leuitick
xiiii) Our lord commaundyd the pre-
sbytes of the olde lawe / whose presthode
or profession was but carnall and figu-
ratiue that they shulde drynke no wyne
nor any thyng that myght make them
drunke / whose wordes are these / wyne
and all that may make you drunke / ye
shall not drynke what tyme ye entre in
the tabernacle of the testamēt lest ye dye
so that ye maye haue knowlege to dys-
cerne betwene the holy & vndoly / Howe
much more this carnalite / drunkenes /
glotony / and volupuousnes / to be auoy-
den of presbytes & ministres of the church /
whose presthode is all together spiri-
tuall / and therfore shuld continually be
occupied in diuine scrupce. Therfore lo-
uyngly he embraceth sobrenes / which is
the very secret keye of mynde / schys-
pode / and also members / the defence of
chaute / the gouernour of chastite / the
very preseruator hard of peace & friend-
shipp. For truly drunkenes in a preste
or regular is as haynous as sacriledge /
& also in any other mā it is a great vyce
sobrenes prolongyth the naturall lyfe
of man / it noythyth the lyfe of grace / it

deser-

of prestes.

deseruyth the lyfe of ioy / it causyth the
 bodye of man to be well proportioned/
 and valyaunt/it makyth a quyer harte/
 it makyth redye a mans mynde to pro-
 ceede in wysdome and vertue / it makyth
 a man apte to applye diuine seruyce/to
 laude god in hymnes and psalmes. And
 to be ouerly gyuen to holy medytacion.
 Therfore regulars that are commaun-
 dyd to serue almyghty god / and to be
 contynually gyuen to the obseruance
 of hym must euermore obserue this ver-
 tue of sobryenes. And as the most hyghe
 byshoppe hathe straptly commaundyd/
 that if wyues be stronge they muste be
 temperyd vnto them / nor in any wyse
 that one prouoke another to dzyntyng/
 but espycally let them beware of suche
 maner of dzyntyng/as men call bzynk-
 thyng/pleggynge/& quaffynge/which ve-
 rily be deadly / & fowlythe / for that that
 maye agree with the complexion of the
 one/maye fortune not to agree with the
 cōplexion of the other. And in conclusiō
 to knowe howe vicious and out of or-
 der it is to excede in the byces foresayd/
 it appereth by that / that the pope
 commaundyd all suche offenders to be

Suspens

The lyfe

suspendyd from theyr offyces and benefyces/except by warnyng they be t^{er}fyed. For if a principall ruler or gouernour of regulars/wyll not correct suche euyll doers / other if he hymselfe do personally offend (which god forbidd) in any wyse before touchyd. Whow great and horrible damnacion hangyth ouer his hed/and also ouer the hedes of such synfull regulars as do offende in the same/not wylling to receyue any hollesome discipline or lernyng in this present lyfe.

¶ Howe it is prohibyte to all clerkes and ministres of the church to occupye any marchaundyse: or to exercyse any temporall offyces or cheyssaunce.

The. viii. article.



According vnto the effecte of the ende / all meane thynges muste be ordyd/for the ende causyth thynges of necessitye to be done: whiche be ordeyned for the ende. And seynge thestate of regulars was institute prouyded and grauntyd (as is before exprelyd) to the entent that they shulde applye to the seruyce of theyr maker/with a free / pure / & quyet mynde/ & seynge also that by theyr merytes and prayers they shulde be re-
consp^{er}

of prestes.

consyled and despye god to be mercifull
be. to themselves and also to them: by
whose almes/charite / & stpendys they
are susteyned: for that cause they are for
bydden to vse any worldly actes or occu-
pations which shulde be a vehement let
both vnto y^e forsayd quyetnes of mynd
vnto theyr pure profession of god/ & also
vnto theyr inwarde lybertye to dyscuss
matters: wherby they shuld be dyschar-
ged of all secular and worldly busynes/
And these be the same worldly busynes
that be ordeyned for worldly lucre: that
is to wylte: worldly marchaundysse and
secular offyces by whom the hart of mā
is greatly dysposyd to outwarde thyn-
ges is greatly wrappyd in worldly thyn-
ges. And also with drawen from spiri-
tuall and ghostly thynghes. To the con-
trarye wherof the Apostle sayth in this
wylle. None that seruyth god ought to
entangle hymselfe in worldly busynes.
wherof the byshoppe Hiculus spake in
the actes of the counsell of Cartage on
this fashyon. I suppose that my sugge-
stion both ryght well please your holy-
nes: & partly displease y^e: w^{ch} is/ that
suche as serue god / and annexed to the
clergie/ shuld not medle in worldly busy-
nes/

The lyfe

nes/offycers / or Guardhyppes of houses.
 The holy byshop Gratianus saith that
 this sentence before rehersed was institute of the Apostles / that is to say that/
 no mā mynistryng in the scrupce of god
 may folde hymselfe in worldly busynes.
 And therfore clerkes may be no purchasers
 of houses and no purchasers of houses
 may occupye the offyces of clerkes.
 And further to proue these thynges / it
 evidently appereth in the .xiii. questio.
 As this / it was establiſhed in the statutes
 of rulys at the counsell of Tarraco /
 that who so euer wold be one of the clergy
 / he must not vse the study of byenge
 good chepe and sellynge dere / and if he
 dyd/he shuld be correctyd by the clergy.
 For that purpose also it was institute
 in the holy synode of Nicco / that for
 cause many clerkes folowynge the fowle
 lucre of auarice/do forget the preceptes
 and commaundementes of god / therefore
 that holy counsel dyd ordeyne this/
 that is to wyte. If any man from hence
 forth were founde takynge any vsury/
 eyther folowynge any fowle lucre by any
 suche maner busynes/or puttynge forth
 any maner of coine for aduauntage or
 goynge about any suche matter of mar-
 chaun

of prestes.

chaun? se / for the onely lucre & gaynes
therof; he shulde then be expulsd from
the clergie: and another of the church
degree to be had in his place. Therof
pope Gelasius speakyth in lyke maner
sayeng thus. Clerkes know ryght well:
that they ought to absteyne from suche
vnworthy gaynes: and also to refrayne
from all crafte and couetousnes of any
maner of marchaundise. And of what de
gree so euer they be that wyl not cease
to vse such lucre: immediatly they muste
be compellyd to forsake theyr offices in
the church. In the counsell also of pope
Marthin it was comaūdyd in this wyse
If any of them forgetyng the feare of
god had done vsurpe vpo trust to wyne
but the hundreth parte therof or lokyd
for gaynes by any maner of marchaun
dise: or hath taken increase: by byeng or
selleng any wyne: corne: or other thyng:
he shuld be caste downe from his degree
and another of the clergie shulde haue
supplied his stede & place. The sayenge
of pope Melchhiades herewith agreyth.
The holy generall counsell hath decreyd:
that hereafter no clerke shall bye any
possessiois or intermedel with any world
ly busynes: except it be for the charge &
(mayntenance

The lyfe

of infantcs/orphelyns/and wydowes/
or excepte he were commaundyd by his
byshop to take the charg of any goodes
longyng vnto the church: for the offces
spirituall and tempozall are extercyse.
But furthermore it appereth about the
ende of the thyrde boke of Decretalles
in the Lateran cōsile: what busynes is
prohibite vnto clerkes. And thus it is
there sayd. There be many secular busi-
nes of the which we shall touche parte/
because vnto them all carnall concupis-
cence apperteyneth. And what so euer
a man that couetyth more thā is ryght:
it is calld foule lucre / it is forbydden
vnto the iustly to take or receyue any
rewards: to hyre any mā for any world-
ly gayne or prayr/to loue any contention
debate or sholdyng to plede or dispute in
secular plees/except it be for the defence
of orphelyns/or wydowes. They ought
to be no doctoures or proctoures of se-
cular matters: to loue no secular games/
or gyftes of fylthy actes or communica-
tion/to delyte in dysce/to desyre vnconue-
nient apparayle for theyr estate: to lyue
in delycousnes: to walowe in glory
and drunkenes: to haunte: or to haue: or
to be conuersant in any vayne or super-
fluous

of prestes.

Among busynes. Behold how bitterly we
prohpyte these thynges with all other
lyke/ vnto regulars and mynysters of
the altare of god. In therulps of the apo
stles it is fether of this matter mencio
ned after this facion. A byshop/ prest/ or
decan ought in nowyse to take vpd the
any secular cure or charge. Pope alexan
der the thyrde vpd also forbyd both regu
lars / and other clerks vpon payne of ex
comynge that they shuld make no marcha
ntyse for any worldly lucre. Saynt Iero
me also sayth in this maner. . . . Flee and
auoyde from the company of a clerke be
yng a merchaunt. Auoyd from ponerte
to ryches/ from a meane man to a noble
man/ as though it were fro a plague of pe
stilence. Therfore prestes/ and clerkes
be forbydden / to be brokers of any secu
lar busynes. All this is confirmed by po
pe Nicolas in the. xlii. chapytre of the
decree in the thyrde questyō sayeng this.
It came to knowlege at a general coun
sel that certayne of the clergye had take
vpon them secular matters/ for the fol
le lucre of great possessyons. Therfore
by that holy cōsell it was decreed that
from then forth no prest/ clerke/ nor regu
lar shulde hyre any possessyons/ or inter

L.

medle

The lyfe

medle with any secular matters or prou-
curatiōs except such as be callyd by the
law theronto for the defence of suche as
be within age or phellynes / or the great
necessytes of wydowes / or els yf the Bis-
shop hath comytted the gouernaunce of
the church goodes vnto them. And ther-
fore / oftentymes it is touched in the de-
cree that some maner of busynes be vns-
lawfull to be don of all men and that be
suche as can not be done without tyme
as vsurye & symonye . And ther be some
that seldome or veray hardly may be
done without synne as the marchaundy-
se before rehercyd . But now to knowe
wherfore clerkes & other mynystres of y^e
churche ought to absteyne from all such
worldly busynes / saynt Thomas in the
lxvii. question of his boke cōpendiously
touchyth sayeng thus . Clerkes ought
not only to absteyne from suche thynges
that be euyll of them selfe / but also from
such thynges as haue a sauour or colour
of euyll as marchaundyse hath / for by cau-
se it is ordeyned for worldly lucre / which
clerkes utterly ought to despyse and cō-
temne. Secōdarly for the great haist of
synne among merchaunts. Thyrddly by
cause that by marchaundyse the mynde of
man

of prestres.

man is wrappid with worldly cares &
bitterly withdrawen/ from godly thyng?
To this the holy Martyr and Bysshop
Cyprianus notyng the occasyon thereof
addyth his mynde sayeng. Suche as be
honorid with holy presthode or constitute
in the scrupce of clerkes ought them selfe
to applye to nothyng/but to the altare
and sacryfice of god with holy and de-
uoute prayers/ & leccyons. Behold ther-
fore to how vertuous / quiet and spiritu-
all lyfe and good example regulars be
bound whiche be comaundyd to abste-
ne not only from euill and vyce it selfe /
but also from all spece of euill and occa-
sion of synne/in lyke maner from all sen-
suall affection/ from the pleasures of this
worlde/from all pompe and worldly gar-
nyshynge / mekely also and lowly from
all vayne and superfluous actes playes
tryfulles / or games. And furthermore
they be commaundyd in nowyse to geue
audyence to mynystralles / gestours / or
dysardes / to play at dyse/ or cardes/
or to be present at suche games
as thore playnly in the
Acticle folowynge
is declared.

E.ii.

f.07

The lyfe

For what cause Clerkes/ Regulars/
and other cōstitute in holy ordres ought
to refrayne fro mynstrell; Jesters and
dysardes/tauerne; & eke the play of
Cardes an Wyse.

The. ix. Article. ¶



It is conueniēt for myny
stres of the church (whom
it behouith to dysferre fro
the lyfe & maners of secu
lar mē) to be rypp in good
maners and dysposicion/
to geue dyligence vnto contricion & to
the fere of god / in lyke maner to applye
them selfe vnto praier/psalmodyes with
other actis of penaunce in the syght of al
mighty god/to the intent that they may
please and satisfie god / as well for theyr
owne excesse and synne/ as for the offen
ces of theyr foudars and benefactours.
Therefore they are cōmaundyd to be wa
re of suche thynges as wylle them dysce
uer from contricion remorfe of cōscience
and deuotyōn/ and suche as wylle enduce
vnpersite luyng and engendre worldly
condicions/as these be/that is to say/fa
milyarite/exercyse/games/& dysportes
of mynstrell; Jesters/& dysardys/ ha
syng

of prestes.

rynge of sauerns feasts and bankettes /
play nge at dyse and cardys / whereunto
many enoyme byces be annexed / and so
it procedeth of the loue and desyre of mo-
ney and concernyth auarepte. But fur-
dermo: that it may be more depcly plai-
ly an surely notyfied / after what facyon
it is lawfull for regulars and mynystres
of the churche some tyme to play / what
maner of disport is comly for them / that
is to be notyd that saint Thomas wry-
tyth in his secounde distinctions. Durā-
dus also in his boke callyd summa. Jo-
han in his boke callyd summa cōfessorū /
and other are of the same oppynyon say-
eng thus. Lyke as a man nedyth corpo-
rall refreshyng / rest / & slepe / for by cause
he is not able to labour contynually /
ryght so the soule hath nede of recreacy-
on and comfort / whiche must be done by
some wordes or actis where nothyng is
intendyd or required but only spirituall
delectacion and pleasure. And these be
callyd wordys or actes of pastyme / and
disport concernyng whom / thre thyngs
are princypally to be obserued. The fyrst
is this. That no such delectacyō be requi-
red / by wordes or actis inhonest fylthy
or hurtfull to any man. The secunde is

E.iii.

that

The lyfe

that the graunte and deuotion of hary
may in nowyse be resoluyd by ony such
game. The thyrde is that y^e game may
agre both with the person / tyme / & place
and also y^e the game be garnysht with
other circumstaunces of vertu. And tru-
ly that vertue wherewith a man may so
conueniently behaue hymselfe / in games
or playes / is (after the mynde of the phi-
losophour in the fourth booke of Ethyk;)
callyd. Furdermore yf there be any fol-
le or tyllhy wanton hurtefull / or sklaun-
derous wordes / or actes excersysed in such
games / or playes. It is a great synne &
oftentymes a synne mortall / althoughe
perauenture the play of it selfe / be but
a synne venyall. Now here we may per-
ceue / with whom / what tyme / and after
what facyon it is lawfull for Regulars
and other mynystres of the church to
play. Suche may play after the maner
and facyon forseyd / as do cōfyt in good
excercise bothe of spirituall and tempor-
all thynges / so that therewith they do
not them selfe ouermuch defatigate and
make wery. But the same lybertie is not
gpyen vnto them that be full of bab-
lynge and Idelnes / whiche contynually
do moue lawghter and wylidnes whiche
also

of prestes.

also do haunte bankettes / and in them
excede bothe in communicacion moches
gestis outragiousnes and intemperan-
cy and also in all other immoderate co-
ceites . Therefore the mynystres of the
churche do greatly offende / and deserue
intollerable punysshement / especially re-
gulars and suche as are constitute in ho-
ly ordres / whiche shuld be every day be-
rayedy to do such thynges as pertain
to the scrupce of god / and spedely perfor-
me theyr howres and tymes of prayer /
hastely puttyng them selfe forwarde in
dutyng scrupce . But in the stede therof
they do dyligently fulfyll such thynges
as may please the carnall carcas / fedyn-
geit gorgeously and delicately delityng
in many praty seueral toys . And fur-
thermore whan theyr helpes be full or
at other vacant tymes / they apply the
selfe other to games and tryfulles or elles
to that / that is moze enoyme and out of
the way / as to play at cardis and dyse /
or beyng in presens where suche games
be vsed comonyng / talkyng / and beyng
in great fauor or samplaryte with the
players / beyng many tymes half parte
whith the / in there wynnynge or lesing.

E.iii.

Certaynly

The lyfe

Certaynly these men haue no reasonable cause to play but rather in such tyme as they do play they oughte to be waye theyr synne / & the tyme that they haue spent in all such vayne recreations / idelnes / tales / fables / laugh^{es} / vnkuytfully / ye and to say the treuth bycously / & also to morne and make amendes accordingly / for al theyr negligens and defaultes whiche they haue commytted in not perfoymynge theyr dyuine seruyce. But these maner of persones are only gyuen to theyr games and dysportes / & as for theyr deuotion and persytines of hart (yf peraventure they had any before) it is altogether seuered and corruptyd. O god lord howe perillous is the lyfe of such men / ye howe wycked and damnable whiche (beynge bound after dyner & supper done / to retozne to theyr chambers) or to go in to theyr studyes or libraries / there to be gyuen (as Cipriane saith) to holy redynge to holisome doctrine & deuoute meditation) wyl vicerly shewe the selfe vnto vtward thyngs / and stobburnly dyspose them selfe to carnal & wordly pleasure / dyuerse maner of wyse lesynge and in spendynge that precyouse tyme / that god hath grauntyd vnto them / no thyng

of prestes.

hyng regardyng that thyng that they
are alled vnto/nother dysclofing they
conſeyens before god/noꝝ yet at any ty-
me dewly and effectually ponderynge/
how great and manyfold thynges they
are bound vnto. Of ſuche perſons ſaynt
Bernard the electe ſeruaunt of god ſpekyth
thus. The negliēt ſlacknes of clerkys
troblyth & moleſtyth the church of god
thꝛoughout al the world/ſurely they are
enryched by other menes laboꝝ/ they ete
the ſcutes of the erth without money oꝝ
charge & deuoure p^r laboures of p^r pooꝛe
a mans mynd accuſtomed with deſpey-
ouſnes/ and barraigne of lernynge muſt
nedes engēdre many vyces. How many
(I pray you) ſhal we ſe the which do not
ſerue noꝝ obey Cryst as theyꝝ lord & god
but theyꝝ wombes as theyꝝ lord & god/
and verily ſoꝛowfull rayneth in many
of them/which myniſtꝛyng vnto the ma-
ker and increaſer of all clennes and cha-
ſte/with a fylthy mouth and an vncle-
ne hart/do not ſere the angell of god ſa-
dyng here vnto them / whiche may de-
ſtroy and cūte the atwo in the myddyll.
Furdermoꝛe as Durandus in his boke
callyd ſumma pꝛocidith ſayenge. Every
maner of play p^r is applyed vnto chaſice

The tyte

or fortune (as the play at dyse is) may
 not be vsed for mony / except fyre thyngs
 be agreeable with the same. The fyre
 is couenience of pson / for it is not law-
 full for clerkes to play at dyse / wherfore
 let a comyt dyse / or bluar be put backe
 from obtaynyng spiritual dygnite / not
 withstanding ther be a custome to the
 contrary as apperith in the tytle Extra
 de excessu. Inter dilectos. yet neuer the
 les the benefyte hereynge obtayned / the
 byshoppe may owe hym fauour / yf he
 wyl he corrected / with the wylle of right he
 ought to be depolysd / for other wyse / he
 ought by the law to be depolysd as ap-
 perith in the xiii. question in the tytle. Si
 quis caritas. The seconde is conueni-
 ence of matyer or substance for some
 maner of wyse they may play for meate /
 or drinke / supposing they game alway
 to be commendable as is before exprest /
 so yf it be not intedyd but as reasonable
 solace & no lucre. The thyrde is the con-
 syon therof / that is to say / that it be not
 excused for couetyse or avarice but for
 recreacion. The fourth is / measure / for
 no man may play about a myllynge / al-
 though the player be veray rich as it ap-
 perith in the begynnynge of the tytle / de
 religios

of prestes .

eligiosis. The fyrtyth is tyme euenlyng
so p^r the play be not done in tyme of mo-
nyng penaunce or counsell. The. vi. is p^r
conuenience of the facyon and maner so
that your play be wythout dysceyte/and
no man do any thyng agaynst the law
of the game/no: one prouoke another to
play . Clerkes fallynge in to soo great
blyndnes wyckednes/& frāsye may well
notethis/that notwithstanding they
holy rulyes & decrees/ they be bold & pre-
sumptuous to dysce openly / and for that
folwe desyre of lucre/they play at cardes
and dysce lyke as it were secular gāsters /
where yet not withstanding they are
bound to make restitution of theyr wy-
nyng ozels to couerte it into some oher
charitable vse otherwyle they may not
be sauyd no: yet absoluid by sacramētes
There be also so many & so haynous offē-
ces cōsistynge in such maner of play/ whi-
che raymūndus hostiensis Johan & other
wth reherce/& pauētūre withi this boke
somwhat to wchid/let thē therfoze expēt
thē lyke wretched creaturis/let thē pōder
theyr dreadfull iudgemēt & also p^r tormētys
of hel intollerable: which sone after ward
they wyl incur without remedie/ except
they do not only forsake theyr abhominā-
cion/ but also to suffer cōdigne penaunce.

The lyfe

An introduction of dyuers holsonie
considerations whereby we may percei-
ue that all feythfull Christen people /
especiallly mynystres of the church
are bound to despise all vanyte
and superfluite of playes
dysportes & other
vayne delectations.

The. i. Article. **A**

LIKE as the holy Apostle Saynt
Petre wyttnessythe. Our sauour
Christe sufferyd for vs / leuynge ex-
ample to folowe his steppes. Therefore
who so sayeth that he dwellyth in Christ
he must walke as Christe walkyd. For
membres ought to be confor:mable vnto
they: hed. And forsothe it is radde that
Christe in this present world / dyd syghe
mo:ne wepe and was trowblyd in spirit
but he neuer played lawghyd nor made
dysport. For that cause we are bound (as
moche as the fragylte of humane na-
ture wyl permyt and suffer vs) to fo-
low his perspytnes graunte and dyligen-
ce as by his owne comaundment appe-
reth in this wyse. He that wyl be my
seruaunt let hem folow me. And forder-
moze.

The

of prestes.

The fyrst introduction to despyse voluptuosities vanite as slacknes is the consideration of the lyfe and conuersacion of Christ/ which sayd vnto his dysciples in this maner. I gaue you exāple/ that as I dyd/ you shuld do/ holy salt Hierome assymyth the same sayeng thus/ it is impossible to reioyce of this worlde/ and after to reigne with Christ. To y^e same Salomon sayd in this wyse. I reputed lawghyng as an errour/ and saye vnto Joy/ why art thou deceoyd in bayne.

The secounde introduction is the consideration of the place of this present lyfe for we be in this worlde as though we were in a great cryle/ in a vale of lamentacion in a cotage of calamyte / in a religion of the shadowe of deth in a fegged Kyngdome in a pylgrymage in a worne way and in a pryson.

Therfore me thynke it agaynst all wysdome in such a place to despyre to swyme in delycyousnes/ to be let slyppe amonge banytees/ to be refreschid with lawghter and dysports / y^e & he that in this wolde couetythe to be prosperous in ryches pleasure and honour shewyth hym selfe in so doyng to be no pylgrym / nother the touer of the heuently contrey/ but a tyfety
ne and

The lyte

ne and/stone of babylon / a seruant of in-
quite / a man in the way of perdyce.
Therof spekyth the pꝛophet Jeremie
saynge thus . O thou wandrynge and
wycked doughter / vnto the tyme that
thou be losyd & dissoluyd from delcypou-
nes / my soule refuſyth all comfozt. And
also this of the pꝛophet Dauid wo is me
that my dwellyng place is prolongyd.
And the Apostle wytnessyth of the holy
pꝛophetes of the old testamēt and of p^e-
laue of nature in this maner / that they
confessyd to be pylgrymes & straun-
gers vpon the Erthe. Therfor from this
pꝛesent exile we shuld oftentymes veray
seruently spghe vnto that most glorious
countrey of blessyd men / & these worldly
ioyes we shuld abhore / as though they
were the veray carppis of euerlastyng
dethe / that we myght say as the apostle
sayde. God forbyd that I shulde reioyce
in any thyng except in the crosse of my
lord Iesu Christe by whom the world of
me is persecuted / and I of the worlde.
The thyrde is the consideration of daun-
gere i whom we be put at large. For we
do walke and be alwayes couersaunt in
the myddys of gynnys / & i a spide euer
where fully cōpassyd with a multtude of
innumerable

of preſſes.

innumerable innumbre moſt cruel & cruell
ty enemies of this world whoſe power &
furoꝝ verap few do eſcape. And truly we
be uncerteigne whether our conuerſatio
do pleaſe god oꝝ no / oꝝ whether ſynally
we ſhall be damned / oꝝ whether our offe
ces ſhalbe forgiven. And alſo we knowe
that greuouſly & many maner of wyſe
we dyſpleaſe our moſt ſtrait & ſeteful iud
ge & that dayly we offend beyng alſo ve
rap prone & redy to vyce. Al ſuch thyngs
yf we deuly conſydre / it ſhal pleaſe vs bet
ter to moꝛne and lament thain to make
dyſpoꝛts & playes. And alſo we ſhall ſay
as Salomon ſayd. Better it is to go to
the howſe of lamentacyon thā to the how
ſe of pleaſure and ſolace. In the one houſe
that is to ſay in the houſe of moꝛnyng
the ende of all moꝛtall men is notyd / & a
man lyuyng ſhulde ponder what is to
come.

The fourth is the coſideracyon of all
evyll and myſchyet as well of offence as
of payne & poyſonement that euery daye
is done in the worlde (that is to ſay) by
cauſe ſo many great and myſchecuous ac
tes be continually done in the worlde /
by cauſe our maker a'myghtye of his
creatures at all tyme is hadde in ſmall
honour

The lyfe

honour and reuerence/ bycause contynually so many soules do eternally perishe/ bycause so many and great tribulacions/ calamities/ penury discomfort/ oppressions/ do incessantly chaunge our frendes/ neighbours/ & members of Christ of whom (yf we loue them) we must haue compassion / as we wolde that thy shulde haue compassion of vs beinge in lyke case/ surely who so doth this dewly ponder/ he wyll say as Ieremye sayd.

who wyll geue to my hed/ water/ and to myn eyes a fountayne of terres/ & I wyll wepe euermore. And scynge Samuell so longe tyme and so sorowfull bewayled Saul/ and Ieoronne the destruction of Ierusalem. & aule also some of the Lorde; this/ howe much more is our forlorn my schiefe to be bewayld. Therfore let vs haue compassion of our neighbours beinge in great daunger and discomfort.

The. v. is the multitude and greatnes of harme and dyspleasure/ that suche delectacions bringyth vnto man. For they spoyle a man from all grace/ whiche delectacions also brought Salomon in to great folie. And attempted due to the transgression of goddes commaundment/ they do behemently blynd the mynd of man and

of prestes.

and harden and maynteyne hym in mys-
chief yf they procure euellastynge dam-
nation. For that thyng whercoen a man
helpteth is but of short tyme his veracy
on and troble therfore is perdurable.
what man for the plesure of one nyght/
wyl be glad euer after to lye i a brēnyng
fornace. Wherfore presume we to com-
myt mortall synne where for one synne
mortal we must be ponyssed with the ter-
rent infernall paynes that euermore do
endure. The fyrth is vylenes fylthynes
and bestly plesure of the fleshe / for the
which / man is most despyssed of god and
made vnylike to aungels / and confor-
ma- ble to bestes / wheruppon the sayenge of
the Prophet Iobiel concernyng carnall
desire is expoundyd on this sayon. The
herdes of bestys dyd rotte and consume
in theyr owne fylthynes and dunge.
And as the Prophet Dauid sayth in ly-
ke maner. A mā that perceyph not whā
he is in honour / may be compared vnto
brute and rude bestes / furthermore moch
bytternes is mingled with the plesure of
the world and the fleshe / suche plesure
also is oftentymes acquysyte / and gotten
both with great expensys and daſigere /
prepared with soze labor / and yet they
f. repent

The lyke

repent at length. Therefore Salomon sayeth youth and voluptuousnes be but vanities. And forther this he sayde. I wyl go and swyme in delpte and walow in ryches/ & yet I perceyvd that all was but vanyte. Therefore in this present lyf graunt to vs to take repentaunce / let vs endeuer our selfe vnto the actes of penance/ let vs also euer absteyne fro wilnes of hart vanyte/ & obstynate lyberte.

Of couenyent apparayle of mynysters of the church/ espyally of regulars/ & of theyr manifold excelle in garnytes & of the desyre therof to be auoided.

The. xi. Article.



The more vertuous p^r the mynistrs of the church are bound to be in respectie of p^r lay people/ the more symple meke & ful of good example they ought to be in theyr apparayle.

They ought in lyke maner to obserue p^r thyng that is red in the boke of Ecclesiasticus that is to say. Thou shalt not reioyce at any tyme in thyne apparayle espyally in such maner of apparayle as may geue euill occasyon or pleasurably intyse or moue the eyes or hartes of womē that behold it (that is to say) they be alwayes bound to beware of curiouse arayment &

of prestres.

nompous apparayle. And where also ho-
ly fathers as Jerome & Chrysostome &
other do not only testyfy this of the but
also of euery saythfull creature sayenge
thus. A man or a woman garnysshynge
themselves by theyr deckyng & trymmyng
prouokynge the eyes of other vpon them
although therof no myschyeft doth ensue
yet he or she so doyeng shal suffer eternal
pynnyshment/because they dyd put forth
poyson/ys there had be any man y^e wold
haue dronke it that is to say they dyd
shew forth temptacyon ys any man wold
haue be attempted. If this abhomy-
nyon be so detestable among the lay peo-
ple/it is much more mischeuous amōge
the ministers of the churche/ which pri-
uypally be bound to edifie other creatures
in vertue. Therfor (seing they go so go-
geously) deckid as though it were a bryde
we may say as saūt Bernard said behold
how they go garnysht lyke to a bryde y^e
were comyng forth of her wedding cha-
ber/insomuch that ys ys se ony such ferre
from you/ ys wolde rather iudge it to be
the bryde than the prest that shulde her
marrye. Surely accordynge to the doc-
trine of holy fathers then be as well com-
maundyd to be contentyd with symple

¶.ii.

apparayle

The lyfe

apparayle/as wth symple fare. Therof
the holy Apostle sayth thus. Be ye in no
wyse confor^mable vnto this world / but
be ye renewed in y^e spirite of your mynd
Therfore a regular or a prest ought to be
ware of al curyosyte/pompe/superfluyte
banyte/and wantonies of al worldly gar
mentes/as the holy Doctours and Pre
lates/ Basilus/ Ildorus & other / haue
be enfor^med. But now cōcernyng this
matter / the rulyes and estatutes whiche
sprange by the diuine inspiracyon shuld
be consyderyd. For why it is red in the
seuenth synode/ and also in the. xxi. decre
as here folowyth. All braggynge/rufflig
and garnysshynge is the thyng that is
mooste farre from holy ordye/ and it beho
uyth such Bysshopes and Clerkes whi
che dresse them selfe in bryght gloriouse
& plesant apparayle/ to amende it/for yf
they remayn in wepyng therof they shal
be put to penance. In semblable wyse al
such maner of men that vse opntemētes
such cursyd people also whiche haue the
in derpsyon that be clothed in pore and
relyggyous ornamentes/shalbe correctyd
by emprisonment. In the olde tyme veri
ly a holy man (that is to say) a man con
stytute in holy ordyes dyd lede his lyfe
becyng

of prestes.

heyng coueryd with a veray hyle and
meane garmēt. And truly every garmēt
that is not taken for necessyte/ but for co
lynes(as Basilius sayeth) hath a spyce
of pryde : moreouer Pope zacharye dyd
instytute this that foloweth. Bysshops
Prestes and Decanes may were no secu
lar apparayle/ but garmentes conueny
ent for theyr orde. They may not presu
me to walke in any cyte compne way or
strete without theyr cowlys or coueryn
ges except it be in some long iornay / for
lyke as a woman prayeng in the church
barcheded/ accorpyng vnto the sayenge
of thapostle both dishonest her owne hed
euen soo prestes or regulars wandryng
abrood without theyr cowles or other vp
per garmētes dishonest theyr Presthod
and relygion/ wherfore it is ordeined y^e
yf any of them do stobbozily presume to
transgresse the sayd institutes / that he
shuld be expulsyd from the relygious co
gregation/ vnto the tyme that he had ful
fillyd such thynges that were ordeigned
by the same estatutes for the same pur
pose. Innocentius the second agreeeth
with the same sayeng thus we commaund
that as wel byshoppe/ as prestes and cler
kes shall the self endeuer to pacifye god

J.iii.

and

The lyfe

and man/ both in theyr spiritual estate & also in theyr cozporal behauour/ & not in superfluyte cutting gardyng or coloure of garmentys / nother they shall offend or hurt by theyr shauyng the aspecte of the beholders whose rule and example they ought to be/ but rather they shuld obserue holynes whiche wold much better be come them. Here also sayth saynt Bernard. That it is the synne of sacryledge/ where as the goodes of poore people be not dystribute/ vnto them. For the ecclesiastical goodes be the patrimonye and heritage of the poore people. And what someuer the mynystrs of the church do take heysydys theyr symple and necessary fode and apparayle it is vpolently stolen fro the poore people as cruel sacryledge. And god ordeyned not that such as mynystre the gospel/ shuld therby desyre ryches or apparayle/ but that they shuld be contentyd to lyue with necessary fode & apparayle/ & not to seke prouocatio vnto pleasure of the body/ not to receyue suche apparayle wherewith they myght be tismyd/ but such wherewith they myght be coueryd. But nowe whan a man may be contentyd with suche a necessarye lyuig what creature in this world wold enter

of prestes.

In to relygyon to that inter that he wold
gather together kepe and dyspend the
stypendes of the clergie in to uses of ple
sure curposyte and vanpte. Hercof agay
ne spchyth that blessed saynt Bernard
sayinge thus. The nakyd and hungry
do cry and complayn on this sacyon.
what auaplyth vnto vs miserably verryd
with hunger and cold / the great chaung
of garmentes that lye in prestys and are
eten of Mothis. It is ours that ye con
sume and wast / it is cruelly stolen from
vs / that ye vnprofytably and wyckid
ly dyspend. O ye curpous and delectable
persones ye haue wherewith we myght
be refressyd / and we pore people can not
fynde wherewith we shuld be susteyned.
And furdermore god moste ryght wyse
and sapient made al wordly goodes co
myn to euery man haupnge nede / and
that euery man shulde conueniently vse
them accordynge to his estate / soo that
as to wchynge / the vse / all temporal
goodes shulde be in comune / although
that concernynge the ryght and tyle of
possessynge & dyspensynge of them / some
men haue proprietye in some goodes.

The lyfe

And as saynt Thomas affirmeth in his booke callyd Secunda secunde/in this manner what soeuer any man superfluously conuerteth to his owne vse / or what soeuer he reseruyth nycardly/or geteth immoderately / he stealeth it away from the poore people / and incurreth the synne of theft or robbery / y^e and the daungere of other greuous crueltie as wilhelm^{us} parissensis & Ulrich^{us} with be wyttinesse and declare. For this purpose also y^e blessed father Ambrose maketh protestacyon of that thyng that is had in the terre in the xviii. distinction / in the chapitre begynnyng licut hi / i this manner of wyse wherther god be so iust / so inequalle to distribute the subsideys and sustynance of lyfe (that is to say) that thou sholdyst be ryche and abundaunt & other veray poore and nedye. O byd he suffer it to be so / to the intent that thou myghtest haue a profe of his lyberalite / and to glorifie another thorough the vertue of patience or sufferance / but thou therefore receyvinge the gyftes of god / & bestowynge them to thy owne vse / thynkyst thou dost nothyng iniustly / yf thou alone do obteyne or reserve the substance of lyfe of many creatures. O what creature can fynde in
is hart

of prestes.

is hart to be so vnecharitable and so con-
tous to dyspende the noryshment of so
many poze people/ not only to his owne
pypuate vse/ but also to his great habun-
daunce delyte and pleasure. And truly it
is no lesse synne to take away from hym
that hath/ than to denye the nedy whan
a man is habundaunt and may geue.

That thou withholdyst/ is the sode & bred
of them that be higr. Thyne apparay-
le that thou putyst vp is the clothyng of
them that be nakid. Thy money which
thou hydest in the erthe/ and dyst enclose
in thy cofer is the heray redemption of
men beyng in calamyte mysery & capti-
uete. Therfore thou mayst knowe howe
thou walowyst in the goodes of other
men / and howe prosperous thou art in
respekte of them / and yet wylt not leue
or depart with them / with this thyng
especially p^r sayeng of Basil^{us} aggreith.

If thou wylt confesse that the temporal
ryches came to thy handes by the gyfte
of god/ shall god therfore be reputed un-
iust/ for dystributyng the goodes vnto
vs/ not indifferently/ by cause thou hast to
much & another hath to litle. Nay but
so thentt that thou shaldest obteigne of
a iuste dispensatioun that they neybour

f.v.

shuld

The lyfe

Shuld be rewarde for his payence it is
 the bide of the hungry that thou with-
 holdst the cote of the bare that thou keepest
 in preyce chamber / the hoare of the
 bare tote that rotteth in thy house / the
 money of the neddy that thou possedest in
 the earth and cofers. Therfor thou doste
 great iniury to io many pooze people as
 thou art able to geue or lend vnto. Let
 my masters the regulars and mynystres
 of the churche to whom one benefyce is
 not competent and sufficient / marke wel
 this. Let such note and consydre the ne-
 cessyte of the pooze people / that haue soo
 many precious garmetes and furre lye-
 eng in theyr chambers / that make theyr
 gold and syluer theyr god / and treasure
 that voluptuously and sumptuously do al-
 dayes of theyr lyfe consume & wast it. Let
 them loke howe they can make accompt
 therof vnto the hygh iudge of heuē / who
 se members they dayly suffer to perishe
 by hungre / theyr nakednes / and cold to
 whom also they geue nother harborow
 nor beddynge. Therof also it is spoken
 in the boke callyd, *Summa pietatum et
 vitiorum* in this wyse. Mynystres of the
 churche do greuously and many maner
 of weys offend in theyr apparayle

of prestes.

First in the exceeding p:cyousnes thereof. Secondly in tendernes. Thirdly in curpousnes. Fourthly in superfluyte therot. For as blessed Johan the Baptist sayth who so hath two cotes that is to say / one that he hath no neede of / let hym geue it to one that hath none.

Therefore trymmpng/ and deckyng/ap-
parayle is to be auoyded of regulars &
mynystres of the church/ which befoze is
touchid in the fourth chapitre that they
shuld were close garmettes not ouer long
nor short / and also there it is prohibyte
that in nowyse they may were red or gre-
ne clothe except in theyr ornamettes per-
teynyng to dyuine seruyce. Furdermoze
it is red among the myracles of gloriouse
saynt Jerome that a certayne cardynal
namyd Andreas beyng dede shulde haue
ben eternaly cōdemned/except saint Je-
rome by intercessyon had obteyned the
restorpyng agayne of the bodye vnto the
soule/ to do penance and satisfyfaccyon in
this present lyfe/ & especyally forbycause
he meruelously exceedyd in his apparay-
le yet notwithstandinge otherwyle he
was a veray chaste and clene man and al-
so endyd with many goodes and com-
mendable vertues.

That

The lyfe

¶ That in nowyse women may dwell
with regulars or mynistrers of
the church constitute in holy
ordres except they be ve
ray old and nere of
kynrede.

The. xii. Article. ¶

EXCELSER is the
maistres of trewth. Therfor
what nedyth it manifoldly to
proue that thyng that expery
ence shewith. For enidelyt it apperith by
good pofe/ how many and enoyme my
schefes howe/hurtefull occasyons howe
great rupne and dyffozmyte (worthy to
be lamentyd) haue sprong by the reason
of the cohabytacyon and dwellynge of
women with prests and regular persons
in somuch that now from the crowne of
the hede to the sole of the fote there is in
a maner no helth (that is to say) fro the
highest vnto the lowest in a maner no
clumes or chastyte. But it is as the pro
phet Ozeas hath pphesied. That forni
cacyon and aduoutery hath swymmyd al
about wherby it apperith howe daunge
rous such cohabytacyon is and worthy
to auoyde/ with howe great reason also
and

of prestes.

and discrecyon/holy fathers & popes/bys
shopes/and other in many generall coun-
celles haue the same prohybted. And
truely the moze straitly and behemety
that it is prohybite vnto high and noble
prelates the moze dysobedience contēpt
and negligence is in them yf it be not a-
uoyded. Therfore certayne decrees of the
generall-councelles of popes / bysshopes
& other be veray necessary to be touchyd
and spokyn of to declare how sagely/ ho-
ly and dyscrete fathers haue abhoireyd/
prohybte and vtterly excludyd this for-
seyd cohabytacyon / or dwellynge with
women. It is rede that concernyng this
matter/it was fully prouyded at the coun-
cell of Magistyne. That no prest or clere
ke shulde kepe or retayne any women
wherby euyl suspicyon myght be had
betwene them/nor yet such maner of wo-
men as theyr rulyrs wole graunt them/
that is to say/that mother/ aunte/ or sy-
ster/for by the the indignacyon of the de-
uyt it hath be perceyved that abhomy-
nabie offence hath be don with them/or els
with theyr waytyng maydens. But the
straytnes of this decree was afterward
somewhat losyd as touchyng veray olde
women & nere kynnyfolke vpon whom
nature

The lyfe

nature or age wyl not suffer any synners
to be suspectyd. Whereupon In
nocentius the thyrde wrytynge to a cer-
tayne bishop sayth. That ye ought not
to suffer women to inhabite with clerkes
except suche (as before is sayd) in whom
the law of nature wyl no euyl suspecte.
Therfore also the blessed Pope Gregori
sayth in this wyse / We wyl and forbyd
that clerkes prestes or regulars be not
conuersant nor dwelling with women /
except with theyr mother / sister / or such
other. It is red and also dyscullyd in the
regystre that blessed Augustyne byd not
agre that one shuld be in howse with his
owne sister sayenge thus. Suche as be
with my sister be not my sisters. There-
fore that understaunding of so great a le-
tyd man ought to be an instructyd vnto
vs. Saynt Gregori sayeth agayne that
it is declared in the decree in the. lxxi.
bystrycyon / how it behouyth that pre-
stes (to whom the people of god be com-
mytted) do substauncially acted byd theyr
lordes Clarke that it be not deuorzyd of
devylls nother I ought to kepe silent
that thylge that I do shew vnto you with
great lamentacyon and sadnes. For I do
perceue prests inhabityng with women /
whiche

of prestes.

Whiche is an abhomyⁿable thyng to be
hard or spoken of a contrary to the sta-
tutes of theyr holy rulyes and ordynaun-
ces. For loke wheree suche cohabytacyon
is / there lackyth no prouacacyon or at-
teptyng of our enemye the deuyll. There-
for they ought to be seuerid lest the tra-
we of the inuisible enemye discerpe them so
that (acco^rdyng to the wordes of the A-
postle) our seruice may not be despy^sd /
for he sayth thus. we prestes ought to be
ware of all vnlawful actes / that we may
lyft by cleue handes vnto almyghty god
(which sayth) be you holy for I am holy
And truly yf any man presumyth to do
contrary / let hym be excludyd from the
honour of presthode. Furthermoze it is
indured in the actes of the generall coun-
cell of Nice in this wyse. About al thyng
the generall counsell forbyddeth that it
is not lawfull to any byshop/prest/decan
or sabberecon/noz to any other in the cle-
gy to haue or kepe any woman in his
house (that is to saye) to inhabyte or
dwell with any woman (as Gratianus
expoundyth in the Rubrykes) except
with the mother/syster or aunte or with
such persones as wyll auoyd susp^{er}con.
The

The lyfe

The veray same thyng was cōmān-
dyd in the Councell of Carthago for
there Sciricius then Pope sayd. we
wyl suffre no other women to be in the
houses of clerkes but suche as the holy
councell of Nice hath sufferd to inhaby-
te with them/for certayne causes only of
necessyte. Moreover holy fathers dyd
not only probybte cohabytacyon with
women/ but also suspectuous visitacyon
and cōmunycacyon with them. This al-
so is conteigned in the fyrth synode of
councell. It is cōuenient to be obseruyd
of al clerkes/that they neuer comyn and
talke with a woman except at a con-
nyent tyme and place/to the entent that
all myscheuous suspicyon may be auoy-
ded. Surely no maner of religyon may
permyt & suffer them to come to gether
alone. This is also reherled in the fyrth
councell Asyrhan. Clerkes or chaste men
may in no wyse resoꝛt to wydowes or vir-
gyns except by the cōmāndement of bps
shopes or prestes / and yet they shall not
alone/ but they shal go with theyr clerks
or with other which the bps hop or prest
hym selfe may not vnto womē alone re-
soꝛt for fere of suspceyd. Therfore pope
Lutius saith. A clerke shal not go alone
without

of prestes.

without his superiours comandment vnto
the howse of a woman. And a prest and a
woman may in no wyse talke to gether
alone. Nor the Archdeccane may vnder
the coloure of humylyte or of his offyce /
oftentymes entre into the howses of wo
men / nor sende any thyng to the good
wyf pruely by theyr scolers / or howse
hold seruantes. For yf that he comyt
tyd and knowen, he shalbe depoyd from
his office. And she shalbe suspended from
the graces of the churche. Therfore by
cause prestes are sufferyd to cohabyte and
dwell with women that be of theyr kyn
rede / it is to be supposed that no other
prohpytyd women ought to inhabyte
with theyr kynneswomen.

And for that cause prestes and regulars
cohabytyng with theyr mothers or kyn
neswome must take hede that no strange
women dwell with theyr kynneswomen
except they be veray olde and agyd.

Meynge also this cohabytacyon is soo
straitly prohpyted / that no prest or
clerke although he were chaste in dede
oughte suche cohabytacyon to admyt for
any hope of temporall auantage whi
che thyng he wyll surelye fulfill / yf he
haue any prest or persone religious vn

The lyte

der hym whiche he ought to entersee.
And although it were sure / that he shulde
never be prouyd of the part of the womē
yet it ought to be scrched / lest y^e woman
be prouyd of his part.

That chastite of body and clenness
of hart do pynceppally beco-
me pyeres and regu-
lars.

The.xiii.Article.

SIR. It is / that no man may
please God or obteyne blyffe /
without clenness of hart inso-
muche / that our sayour sayth.
Blessed they that be cleane of hart for
they shall se the face of god. wherof also
Salomon sayth. He that louyth clen-
nes of hart shall haue a kyng to his fren-
de. wherof in lyke maner the Apostle
sayd / vnto the kyng of wyldest immor-
fall and maylyble on this lassyon. Every
feythfull Christen man is bounde to cha-
styte / other bregynall / conyugal / or bidu-
all / or to suche chastyte that is abaynen-
ce from all vnlawfull congressen. Fur-
thermoze the mynysters of the church be
many

of prestres.

many wayes bounde vnto Chastyte.
For firste by cause in theyre fyrste consecra-
tion / or promotion to holy ordres / they
haue straitly by vowe & promysse bounde
thē selfe vnto chastyte. And as it is cop-
pously declaryd in theyr decree. No man
ought to be promotyd vnto presthode /
nor yet to take vpon hym any holy or-
dres that be inferiour vnto presthode / ex-
cept he do promysse and vowe chastyte /
and that chastyte is not only outwardly
promysed / but also inwardly / insomuche
that they bynd them selfe to obserue all
the holy rulyes and decrees of the same.
For verely a vowe doth more substan-
tially bynd / than an othe / as saynt Tho-
mas in his booke callyd *Secūda secunde*.
Ioannes Bartholomeus and other / do
wyttnesse / and as Alexander Bonan-
tura and other / that do wyte vpon the
fourth booke of y^e sentence sayen. A vowe
by relygyous professyon and takynge of
holy ordres / is solemnized & made veray
sollemne in effecte whiche also strongly
byndyth a mā to the performinge thereof
& lykewise vnto spiritual courtesie in
somuch that it doth not only prohibyt & let
them to contracte matrimony / but also
dissoluetly and breakyth that matrimo-

B.ii.

ny that

The lyte

ny that is alredy contracted/for in suche
a solemne bowe a man promyseth not
only to do well and eschew euyl/but also
he muste fulfyll his bowe in seuerynge
hymselfe from wordly and carnall thyn-
ges and also in applyenge dyuyn & spy-
rituall thynges. Therto: prestes regu-
lars & other in the takynge of holy ordres
they geue and offer them selfe to god / to
the entet that they wyl do hym scythful
and dplygent seruyce / and therfore they
be consecrate to the: maker/and ordey-
ned to be his mynystres. The violent ta-
kyng and vsurpyng of other mennes
goodes/is thefte/ys it happen to be done
prieuely. And truly robbrye openly done
and also the abusyon of holy thynges is
callyd sacrilege. Also robbryng or spoy-
lynge of thyngs consecrate vnto god may
be very well iudged sacrilege. Therfore
prestes and mynystres of the church do-
ynge fornyccaryon do comyt sacryledge /
sacryledger ys sacryledge and hygge rob-
brye / in withd:awynge them selfe from
the seruice of god/from the actes of clen-
nes/and shamefull obeyeng and geuyng
them selfe to al maner of foule synnyng
and abhomyuable vyce & carnall desyre.
wherfore ys stelyng or robbryng of a cha-
lrys

of prestes.

lepes be an horrible theft and sacriledge
 muche moze adhomynable is the spoy-
 lynge or corruptyng of a reasonable crea-
 ture offeryd/consecrate and geuen unto
 god/as prestes be. Secundarily chastite-
 pynceppally belongeth unto mynystres
 of the church/for this cause. For as ho-
 ly Dionisius sayeth. The lowest of hygh
 ordie/and the hyghest of the lower ordie
 owght to be agreeable and lyke/ now the
 lowest of the hygh hyperarchy or ordie is
 the company of holy aungeles. And the
 hyghest in the lower ordie of the church
 mynstaunt is the ordie of prestes and
 clerkes wherfore the prophet Malachie
 callyth a prest by the name of aungell/
 for it is sayd. The lpppps of a prest
 dothe kepe lernynge/ and the people:
 shall loke for the; lawe out of his
 mouth/for he is the aungel of the lord of
 hostes. Prestes therfore and Clerkes are
 bound to lyue purely/ & chastly lyke aun-
 geles/but they agaynst all rpyghtwysnes
 do inordynatly synne/ledynge the; lyfe
 in carnall fylthy & bestly desyre. Thys
 ly because they be in the place and stede
 of god/& as the vicars of god. Therfore
 they are straitly bound to lyue godly/ &
 not bestly & fylthylly/ or els they do gre-

B.in.

uously

The lyte

Hously offend against the charyte of god.
Fourthly forby cause they be set in high
dygnyte & had in greater honour for p^e
loue of god/ therfore they ought to be ac
ceptable to god/ & to serue hym in clenys.
Fifthly forby cause they may please god
reconsyle other vnto god/ and clence the
that be vncleane / therfore they are bound
to please god with chastyte and clenness.
And where saynt Bernard sayeth wo be
to the chyldren of the deuyll whiche not
beyng reconsyled themselfe / hath take
vpon them the offyce to reconsyle other/
as though it were people that had done
ryght wysnes. And also the apostle affy
myth the same sayeng thus. They that
be in fleshe (that is to say) they that lyue
carnally can not please god. In the booke
also of Ecclesiasticus thus it is sayd. Of
an vncleane thyng what may be made
cleane. And in the .xii. chappre of the pro
phet Isaiah It is wyrtten thus. The pre
stys were cleynd & than they made cleane
the people. The sytte forby cause they do
take / handell & rectre holy thynges / pe
that thyng that is holy of all holy / whi
che sayeth hymselfe. I am the luyng
birde that descendyd fro heuyn. And fur

of prestes.

beemore yf it were so straitly pbybte in
Moyses law that no vncleue yson shulde
eate offerre or thouchy any fleshy / or best
ly sacryfice / holwe cursyd & myschuous
be they before the face of god / whiche do
take handell and put forth to other / the
beray body / & blode of our sauour Christ
and only be gotten sonne of god / and yet
they remayn in theyr abhominacion by
nyng weychedly and felethly / & geuyng
euill occasyon to other / yd not god by
the mouth of Moyses commaund that no
prest shuld presume to mynstre vnto god
except he were sanctyfyed. And also that
a man beyng vncleue shulde not offerre
bied vnto god. And in a nother place a
corrupt soule which had eten of the sacri
fice of good creatures shuld perishe fro
among the people. And fether in the fyrst
booke of kynges in the xii. chaptyre it is
red that a byshop sayd vnto Dauid in this
myse. I haue no vnholowyd bied / but
only holy bied / and yf the chyldren and
seruantes be cleue especially from wo
men / let them eate it / yf the prestes of
the old law in the tyme of theyr offyce /
and sacryfice were commaundyd to ab
steyne from theyr lawfull wyues.

The lyte

Therefore howe great myschepse cursyd-
nes and vnhanfastnes is among prestys
and clerkes whiche (walowynge in theyr
fowle & abhominable fylthynges) do han-
dell the most worthy and precious sacra-
mentes. Woth ther not (thynke you) ha-
ge ouer theyr herdes an inspyte & more
than a paynfull ponyment. God kno-
weth. The seuenth is for by cause they be
the eyes in the mystical body of the hole
church and truly a lytyll spot or offence
is veray hurtfull to the eye. The eyght
for by cause they be the glasse into whom
the lay people thide dyrecte theyr eyes/
whiche glasse ought to be veray cleyn &
tryght. Thur as by cause the carnalitye
of them is so abundaunt / to the great in-
iurye / and contemp of almyghty god / and
griue to euery occasion vnto the people
and also is more hurtful than can be sup-
posed vnto all such offenders / for it blyp-
dyth and hardeneth them in vice and in
concluseion damnieth them. It maketh
also suche vyle and cursyd creatures / to
be despyled by dayned and hated both of
god & man. farthermore after the mea-
nyng of wilhelmus & auilensis & other
doctours / such synners haue no ryght
to the goodes of the church which be de-
puted

of prestes.

puted to the membres and solowpares of
Christ. And what soeuer they do vsurpe
and spend of the patrymonye of Christe
it is vcray thefte and robbrye. They be
also straptly bound to restytucion of all
suche goodes as they dyspend amonge
dores oz harlottes oz other fylthy perso-
nes/ behold therfore howe synfull & dani-
gerous the lyfe of wanton and lecherous
mynistres is. Therfore let them restrayn
from the snares & gynnies of the dyuell /
let the also feare the great hepe of peryll
and daunger that hangyth ouer them
ozels we may say to them as it is sayd in
scripture. The people be without counsell
and wysdome / wolde to god they wolde
ware wylf & vnderstand that they myght
prepare to auoyde daunger in tyme to
come.

**¶ Of the peryll and improuydenice of
prestes and regulars dwellyngs
with women/gatheryd out
of the sayenges of ma-
ny holy men.**

¶ The.xiiii. Article.

B.b.

They

The lyfe



De p do lyue mortally (as
 saynt Augustin sayth) which
 put forth them selfe to strepe
 or debate. And truly that mā
 doth cleue contrary to wpsdo
 me (whereunto we be bound as well as to
 chaite and iustice) which presumpth to
 passe hygher a bypge / from the wyche
 scanty one amonge an hundredeth hath
 escaped without falling in / or drawyng.
 In this case what man can say / but he
 dyd veray folyshly and was veray bar-
 reigne of wpsdoome / to put hym selfe in so
 great perccy much rather may bynd
 fast presles or regulares be countyd folis
 which contrary to thair laue well coha-
 byt and dwell with women from whom
 scanty one amōg a thousand shall escape
 without great peryl and daungere. And
 yf pcauseure some do fortune to eschew
 the folye & felthly acte it selfe veray & we
 can escape unelene wyagnacyon evyll
 prouolacion vniuersall consens and sen-
 sualite therof. wherefore they ought in
 nowyse to choshyte / or dwell with any
 women (except she be veray agyd / or of
 theyr nygh kynrede) nor chēqually to be-
 hold any woman / nor to haue any opor-
 tūnyte of tyme / or place to comyt any
 evyll acte with her. Now be it yf he wee

of prestes.

such a one as were of spuguler goodnes/
exercized and tride in the feare of god &
al maner of vertue aboue the comd sozte
of men/it were not possyble that he shuld
by any mean errede/oz be entagled with
any sache carnall desyre/ oz eny wyse be
mouyd from the purpose of chastyte. Is
it not veray daungerous for a man not
yet exersyled nor establyshed i grace &
vertue/to inhabyte/ oz dwell with a wo-
man that is prouyde. Let euery prest
and clerke therfore take hede that no wo-
man seldome oz neuer do ons enter into
theyr houses / for who so euer bysyteth
the walkes / oz steppes of wome can not
inhabyte with god with a cleane and hole
hart. For a woman inflamyth the consci-
ens of hym with whom she dwellyth.

Thou shalt neuer dispute/ oz haue con-
uycacyon of the bewtye of women. But
yf thou perceue a womā in good conuer-
sacyon/loue her with spirituall affection
and not wth corporall bysytacyon. Ther-
for it is comādyd vnto prests & clerks i
the xxxiii. distynction that they shuld a-
uoyd ouermuch familiarite wth theyr kys-
solye inhabytyng wth the furdermore as
saynt Jerome saeth. The sharpest tormen-
tes of hell be reseruyd vnto prestes and
clerks doyeng fornyacyon/ & ferder this

The lyfe

wobbe to the beying a prest that hath kyll
the doughter of venus with the same
mouth with whom a lypell before thou
dydyst receue the sonne of the Wyrgyn
Mary. O cursyd Judas that with a kys
se dost betray the sonne of man. Therfor
also glozyous saynt Jerome beynge in
the extremyte of dethe in the presence of
the blessed bodye of our lord/spake vnto
Christe sayeng thus. wobbe to them that
receue the vnworthyl/for truly they do
crucifye the agayne to theyr great con-
demnation and punishment. Alas good
lord what shall I say/for by cause prestes
do cate the in the altare / as it were the
fleche of byrdes or bestes on a table / by-
cause also in the nyght they vse fylthy co-
gressyon with women/ & early in the mor-
nyng in theyr celebracion they do receue
the/and cate the. Than good lord where
art thou byd dost thou slepe or wake :
Is such serupce accepted of the: Is that
the sacrytce and oblation whiche thou
despyst. Behold the world is full of pre-
stes and yet ther is scantly one amonge
an holdyeth that is good and weldepy-
syd. There is in the world none so cruell
a best as an euill and wanton prest is
for he dysdaynyth to be correctyd in no
wyse

of prestes.

wyse wyl suffer to here the treuth. Ther
fore in the person of Chyriste spekyng
saynt Augustyne in this wyse. O thou
prest torment me nomore with thy of-
fences / for the wound of thy synne bur-
tyth me more (that is to say) dyspleasyth
me more / than the wound of my syde.

Thou dost synne more greuously which
offendyst me raynyng in leuyn with thy
fornicacyon / and my body & blod vnrecu-
rently handelyst / geuyng euill occasyon
and example vnto my people / for whose
helth I dyd vouchsaft to be crucified on
a crosse / than they which also crucifyed
me walkyng on the erth. Therfor o thou
preste here holy saynt Bernard exhor-
tyng and enformyng the / sayeng thus.
O thou preste thy mouth is dayly made
the receuer / and as ye wold say the sepul-
ture of the blessyd body of Chyrist. Ther-
fore why doth that mouth euer lye / why
doth it euer speke lecherously why is that
soule and mynd of thyn made vptions .
wherfore do thyn yes behold banyces /
whiche euer day on the altare hath be-
fore them / Chyriste hym selfe the hyghe &
euerlastyng trewth / why puttyst thou
forth thy handes vnto thynges unla-
full and vncleane / which do handell most
preyous

The lyfe

precious and immaculate sacramentes /
why swymmyst thou in the drunken stre-
mys of wyne / whiche drynkyt the blod
of our sayour / & cuer oughtyst to be full
of spiritual refresshyng. Is it not a fowle
and myschenous acte for the / to handell
the shameles bodyes of harlotes with
such handes as be geuen / and dedycate
vnto god ye consecrate also with holy a-
nointment / and with the same handes
to touch the holy body of our lord Iesus
Christe. O how wycked & presumptuous
it is to handell the sonne of the Virgyne
Mary / ye the only begoten sonne of god
the father / and hym to receue with so fyl-
thy a mouth whiche excellyth and ouer-
cummyth all vnderstandyng. what man
wolde not be abashyd to se the most pre-
cious treasour in the worlde to be cast in
to a dounghyll. For truly a Lecherous
prest is more fylthy than any hurt / or
clay / and more synkyng and corrupt
than any synke / or drawght furdermore
as saynt Ierome sayeth / and as it is red
in the decree / no man ought for to eate
of the easter lambe / or to be receyvd to
the comunyon at such tyme as he kno-
with his wyse.

The cause wherof saynt Thomas &
other

of prestes.

other vpon the fourth booke of sentence /
haue notyd sayeng thus / that althowgh
the carnall acte in wedlocke may be done
without synne / yet by the pleasure and de-
liuiousnes thereto annexed / it plockyth
and withdraueth a mans mynde fro de-
uocyon. Therfor yf it be not laful for ma-
ryed folke / whiche may vse the bodyly oc-
cupacyon without synne / to receyue theyr
maker / where the nyght before they ha-
ue carnally knowen yche other. Howe
abhomynable do these prestes whiche co-
mpting soynycacyon in the nyght / pre-
sume to celebrate in the day. Surely it
may be concupyd by no vnderstandynge
nor by any tong it may be expressed how
inordynatly such do offend whiche beyng
polluted with so foule vyce / do presume
to handel and receyue the most pure and
heuenly mysteries of Christ / and to pro-
nounce the most holy wordes of the masse
canon therof with so corrupt a mouth.
Therfore of suche thynges spekyth the
dygd iudge Christ hymself by the mouth
of the pphet Ozeas sayeng thus. I wyl
correcte the at my pleasure / and thus be-
holde I wyl miete the as it were a bere &
lyones that had lost theyr whelpes and
wyl destroye the inward parte of them
& also wyl consume the as it were a lyon.

The lyte

Then as the Prophet Dauid this psalmes sayth. He wyl speke vnto them in his angre/and wyl bere and trouble them in his furor. He wyl thrust them in to a foynace of fyre in tyme of his wrathe & they shall haue no rest in theyr mysery. And as the Prophet Ezechiel spekyth. Beholde I haue clappyd my handes at theyr malyce. Can your hart susteine or your handes p̄cuayle in the tyme of my punysshment: And thus I wyl blow you and brenne you in the fyre of furor/ and you shall be blowen in the myddis of a foynace & than I wyl cease/ of whom also god by the Prophet Amos god spekyth in this wylse. Beholde I wyl grate vpon you/as a wayne wyl grate that is laden with hey. And now by the Prophet Malachias the word of god is spoken vnto prestes that polute and corrupt his name in this wylse. I wyl cast vpon you the fyltes of your ceremonies/and it shall take you with it (that is to say) I wyl impute vnto you/your owne fylthy & fleshy werkis/& you shall fall together with your myscheyf into the depe flod of Acheon in hell. And the more intently ye were geuen vnto voluptuousnes and carnal desyre/the more peynfully ye shall be boznyd

of prestes.

be burnyd in most hote and wyld fyre for
euermore / in lyke maner as I haue spo-
ken in the Apocalypsis / that is to say.
The more they haue glorified the selfe
in delyste and plesure / geue vnto them so
much the more payn and torment.

Of the same matter it appereth in the
revelacions of saynt Katerpne
the virgin of zenis. And also
so of the holy wydowe
saynt bygyde.

✠ The. xv. Article. ✠



It is red in the booke of the we-
terpne & reuelacions of saynt
Katerpne of zenis that the e-
uerlastyng father spake vnto
her in a vylson in this wyse. The soule
of wretched and carnall prestes / takyth
great corruption of vyce by theyr sensu-
alyte. And furder thus I haue anoynted
and consecrate them to the entent that
they shuld serue me in holynes & iustice /
and mynystre sacrametes vnto belouers
and wottyst thou my welbelouyd dough-
ter howe they reward me for my benefy-
tyall goodnes : I wyll tell the howe.

¶ They

The lyfe

They to dayly persecute me with so many myscheuous actes/that it is impossible for thy tonge to expresse it. And yet thou bydyst herethem all reherled/ thou woldyst dye for veray sorow/ yet I wyl shewe the some of them that thou mayst haue the more compassyon.

For verily they oughte to stand at the table of the moste holy crosse there incessantly byng in medytacyon / of the bytter passyon of Christ/and there them selfe to fede with the foode of soules/ labouryng continually for the helth of them / euen more reioysyng in the spiritual profet of them. But they go into taverns/and there they swere/and stare/ tellyng wanton tales/ scrupye Glotony / and Drunkenes / forgetyng theyr dyuyn scrupye / but yet they chaunce to say it/ they hartes not withstandyng be farre from me. They be full of miserable byec/ as it were men bludged in synne / yet theyr wordes and dedes standyth alwayes of wantones/ they be not ashamed to offende openly/ they be veray rybaldes/players/and mockers. But after they haue played away theyr soules / so that it pertyneth to the bodye of the dyuell/ th an they play away the goodes of the

of prestes.

the church/and to expende the substance
 (whiche they take in the name and ver-
 tue of the blod of our saupour Christe)
 in theyr owne pleasyres so that the poore
 people be nothyng holpen therwith.
 Another the church hath necessarye or-
 namentes / for they beyng the tem-
 ple of the dyuell / care not for my tem-
 ple and suche ornaments as they shuld
 make in the church/they make in theyr
 owne houses / ye and do worse with it
 then that / for loke howe the bryde gro-
 me attyryth his bryde/ ryght so these fle-
 shly dyuelles do attyre theyr fleshy con-
 cubynes and perramours. And whan
 these unhappye dyuels (that is to saye)
 wanton prestes do passe vnto the altare/
 they be nothyng abashed to se theyr con-
 cubynes or harlottes goynge with theyr
 chyldren to do theyr oblacyon with o-
 ther people. O ye dyuelles and worse
 then dyuelles/wolde to god yowr iniqui-
 te were more hyd vnder soote / for than it
 shuld do lesse hurt vnto the lay subiectes
 But nowe truly ye be the veray occasy-
 on of abhomynable luyngge. Is this
 the purpse of cleannes that I desyre in a
 preste.

¶.ii.

Is this

The lyfe

In this clennes / whā he rylyth with an
vncleane mynd with a corrupte & synnig
bodye with whom all nyght he lay with
his deuyll or leman . O tabernacle of Be
hchub / where is they weldysposed wat
chyng in the nyght whan continually
thou shuldyt be deuoute i prayer at whi
che tyme also thou shuldyt vertuouflye
dyspose they selfe to celebratyon on the
morrow. Therefore of carnall delyte it cō
myth / that these syllye prestys do nother
seke myne honour / the helth of the selfe
nor yet of theyr neyours. They wyl
not correcte also such as they haue cure &
charge of / but of theyr owne propre and
pryuate affection wherwith they be en
flampd / they coueyte and desyre worldly
ryches pleasure of the body with whom
yet they must haue temporall honoures
delycate feastes and bankettyes precious
superfluous and well trymmyd garmen
tes of these prestes therefore this holy &
innocent virgyn saynt Katerine wrote
many other thynges by the speche and
reuelacion of god / wiche be brought in /
in another place.

The moreouer there be many thyngs red
of these prestes in the booke of the reuela
cyon of the blessyd wydowe saynt By
gyde

of prestes.

gyde where amonge oher Christ in a be
syone spake vnto her on this sacp^o/ was
it not sayd by the prophet Dauid howe
they that haue eten my bread haue mag
nyfied supplantacyon aboue me/ yee^e so
now I say to you. That slyly & lecherous
prestys which cate my bread on the altare/
be veray traitours vnto me. I beholde y^e
Jewes & paynymys & I can yeeue among
the none worse thā such prestys. Therefore
of the veray seile of iustyce/ I curse them.
And cursyd be all thyng that they take
of the erth to theyr pyffet or sustenacyon/
for by cause they be so unkynd to god.
Cursyd be theyr meate/ and drinke whi
che fedeth theyr bodyes to woymes mea
te and theyr soules to hel (that is to say)
they kepe the soules in theyr bodyes to
theyr damnacyons. Cursyd be the bodyes
of them/ whiche shall rype and brenne in
hell without end. Cursyd be the yerres in
whom they so viciously haue lyuen. Cur
syd be that houre that begynneth to the
in hell/ & shall neuer haue ende. Cursyd be
y^e eyes of the with whō they haue sene
the lyght of the fyrmament. Cursyd be
the eares of the that hath hard my wor
des/ and not fulfylled them. Cursyd be
the taste of them wherewith they haue

D.iii. perceyvd

The lyfe

perceyvd my gyftes. Cursyd be the touchyng of them / that haue touchyd me unworthyly. Cursyd be the sauour of the that haue smellyd thynges for theyr owne delyght / and despyfed me / that am most delectable of all thyng. Amonge these cursyd prestes there rayneth couetyse auarice slewth symony / hatred / obduracy / carnall pleasure / the lode of the world / and yet with worldly thynges they are not satisfyed. They preche my worde and seme to do many good thynges / but all is to theyr owne honour and comodite. Holy sancte Bugitte reberseth many mo thynges lyke vnto these whiche nowe for this purpose we haue sufficently touchyd bycause in the booke of the lyfe and rules of curates they be moze largely declaryd.

That regulars & all men constitute in holy ordres are bound to be vertuous & holy gathered out of the sayng of holy Dionysius. ¶ The. xvi. Article. ¶

The holy & most dyupne Dionysius saith. That no man ought to presume to be a leder in ony dyupne office or scrupce / but such as be most lyke or beraynyngbe sacponed vnto god i vertue (that is to say) so wyse and vertuous that of the plentyousnes of the other may

of prestes.

be clensed lyghtened & with vertue reple
 nished where vpon saite Thomas vps
 the fourth boke of sentence in the. xxiij.
 dysynctyon concludyth & Albertus affie
 myth the same. That where euer man
 in holy ordres/is constitute a leder i other
 dyuync matters / yf he presume to take
 vnworthly that ordre vpon hym / he
 synneth dedly. In lyke maner he that is
 constitute in holy ordres / wether he be
 prest/deane/or subdeane/as ostentyme
 as he executyth any acte of his holy or
 dre vnworthly/so ostentymes he synneth
 dedly/ as it were a man that had no cha
 rite nor yet grace. The same thyng Du
 rand^s in his boke callyd summa raymū
 dus / Iohannes Bonauktura and other
 agreably do affyrm. Therfore holynes
 of lyfe is aswel required vnto the taking
 of holy ordre/as to the execution and de
 monystracion of the same by cause of the
 comaundmēt & not by cause of the sacra
 ment/herewith aggrepyth the sapenge of
 that deuoute Dionysius in a certayn epi
 stle whiche he wrote ad demophilū say
 eng thus. Any man not wel disposyd nor
 vertuous/vnworthly executing thyngs
 that be holy shewyth hym to be veray
 presumptuous / and a man supposynge

h.iii.

that

The lyfe

that god is ignorant of that/that he knoweth (that is to say) he thynketh p^r god (whom lyke a lyer he callyd father) with dole or mystake his wretchednes or vice. I wyll not say that such a on doth (lyke a Christen man) shew forth prayers / or orisons vpon the holy synghes that is to say the sacramentes. vpon whiche wordes the doctours before rehersed do conclude/that such a prest/decane/or sub decane/ is taken as a blasphemour deceiver & traptout vnto Christe. Therefore (seying regulars be in some holy ordre) is apperyth howe vertuous and cleane they ought to be / and howe obedyntly they ought to execute theyr offices. whereby also they be bounde to geue good example vnto the people / and that theyr neyghbours shulde be parttakers of the abundance of theyr vertu and grace. &c.

Of the qualyte of regulars gathered out of the saynges of saynt Bernard.

The. xlii. Article.

The holy and elect saynt Bernard/ the louet of regular bretherne / a fauourer of the p^ublyk wele/ auoydur & assistour of the church/ oft tyme in his booke describyth and lamenteth the

of prestes.

the great ruyne / & decay of the church.
 But amonge all other / especially he bewaylcth the lapse and fall of regulars.
 He sayeth also that Clerkes (above all men) do pryncypally vsurpe and excersyse that thyng wherein is theyr delyte: and biterey auoyde y^e thyng that shulde be paynfull vnto the. And no doubt euery kynd of people hath some labour / & some pleasure but now adayes ye may perceiue & meteuaile at the pynson of Clerkes / how by a newe meanes they can dysterne the pleasure from the payne / chousyng & embracing all thyng for theyr delyte / and biterey auoidyng all thyng that is greuous and peynfull. They compare with souldiers rufflers of the worlde in pryde / noble apparaunce / trappynge of hoxes or mules / huntynge / halwayng / dyce / cardes / ye thy begynne to counterfet womē in wepyng pretyous furrer hangynge donne on theyr neckes in swete odours in glourious garmentes ye in all maner of tendernes. Ful craftely they restryne from wepyng of harnes / fro watchynge all nyght in paylyons / from soderyng / symmysches.

The husbandman swetyth the keeper of the byncard dyggyth / and deluyth

P.v.

And

The lyfe

And clerkes which syt sluggysshly in idelnes at the fruteful tyme of the yere/ to comaunde they: barnes to be stuffyd they: buttreyes to be replenysshed before the husbandmē. They cate fyne white bred. They drinke pure wine / they franke the with the fattenes of corne / they coueyt the sauour of straung and swete herbes. Marchauntes do sayle about the see in grete labour / both in daſigere of body & lyfe gathering ryches that by wyacke or myſaunture they may lese these are soze thynges. Our ryche prestes wyl be ware of them / for they wyl slepe in the meane space. I wyl not say they play p^e wantons in they: beddes/ furdernore o^r ther craftesme geate they: lpyng with soze labour/ but idell clerkes wallowe & swymme in ryches & pleasure without labour/ or payne/ but at the last whan al men shall aryse euery man in his ordre/ where(thynke ye) this generacion shall be appointed. If they tozne to kynyghts or sowdypars. They wyl beate the away in lyke maner husbandmen/ marchauntes/ and all other craftes men wyl dryue them away fro they: partes/ bycause they haue not labouryd as they haue done. But than what remapneth.

Infayth

of prestes.

Insayth that suche (whom euery ordre
doth forsake and accuse) must be appoy-
ned vnto a place where is no ordre. But
euelastynge fere and trouble. Therefore
saynt Bernard shewyth in his thyrd bo-
ke callyd (de consideracione) that clerkes
be out of all ordre / saynge thus. what
meaneth it that clerkes wyl be of one
saccon / and yet wyl be countyd to be of
another / for in theyr apparayle they be
sowdypars or rustlers in theyr garynce or
lure they are vcray clerkes / but in dede
they appere to be nother / for they fyght
not as sowdypars / & theyr techynge and
conuersacyon is not lyke clerkes / howe
may we knowe of what ordre they be /
whan they wyl be of both ordres / but
truly they destroy and confound bothe.
The blyssed apostle sayd thus euery mā
shall arpe in his ordre. In whiche (thyn-
ke ye) shall these arpe. whether they
that haue offcudyd without ordre shall
perpse without ordre. Or yf it be suppo-
sed that the most true / and ryght wylse
God wyl forsake (from the hyghest
vnto the loweste) all them that be
out of ordre. I feare lest they shall be or-
dred in no other place but where euelas-
ting horout / fere / & trouble wyl inhabyte.
Forsoth

The lyfe

Forsooth they be not frendly spouses whi-
che feare not to reiaigne thynges assig-
ned vnto to church to theyr owne priuat
use and professe. And suche as ought to
prepare tabernacles in heuen both for
them self and other / they procure herein
the earth houses vpon houses lande vpon
land / & contrary to the doctrine of Christ
they mucke vp mony & treasure in this
world / where as nature is contentid with
a lytyll. But they do not only seke a ne-
cessary lyuynge by the goodys of y^e church
whiche they may obtayne with small pe-
rils / but also they desyre to be honourd
they study to please man & not god / to be
proud & full of plesure / in euery poit to be
comfortable to this world. It is not cha-
ryte / but a courtoisnes that is straunge
to god / which induceth al mē to gete pri-
uate honour / or ryches in substance / or
ordres of y^e church / or els to seke plesure
of y^e body (that is to say) such thyngs as
be theyrs / & not such thingys as be Christs
what meane they to be so folc hardye.
Howe chauncyth it that they be so mad /
where is the feare of god / where is the
remembraunce of deeth / where is the fea-
re of the paynes of hell / where is the lo-
kyng for the terrible day of iudgment.

The

of prestes.

The spouses cryeth to the heuilly spouse
in this maner. Take me with the/ we
wyl runne in to the sauour of thyne ol-
mentes. Nowe euery man takyng his
owne pleasure/ and folowynge the sauour
of foule lucre/ they suppose gaires to be
goodnes / the damnation of whom is
right wylse.

Of the moſte ſtrayte and terryble
iudgement of god vpon clerkes
had out of the wordes of glo-
ryous ſaynt Bernard.

Holy ſaſt Bernard ſpekkyth of this
matter ſayeng thus/ wo be to the
beig a clerke/ weth is in thy cuppe
deth is in thy deſypte and pleaſure / forby-
cauſe thou eateſt & drynkyſt the ſynnes
of^r people (that is to ſay) thou eateſt &
drynkeſt the goodes of the churche offer-
ryd of the people to purge the from ſyn-
ne. Thou ekenyſt to haue therewardes
of the churche for god a mercy. Thou ſin-
gyſt for them / but better it were for the
to begge & labour except by thy iuſt con-
uerſacyon in all thyng/ thou do ſatyſfy
god for the offences of thy foundars and
benefactours. Therfore be thou ſad and
circumſpecte to do frutes of penaunce to
God

The lyfe

thed cōdygne teres for theyr offences as
though thou shuldest make accompt for
them: or els thou knowest that the syn-
nys of the people (whiche now thou ac-
countyst among thy pleasures/nothyng
regarding them as though they belong-
yd not vnto the) wyl be layed to thy
charge. ¶ the great depnes of the iudge-
mentes of god/ ¶ how terribly is god in
his counsailes to the chyldren of men.
¶ wretchis it wylde to late for you to
say vnto the hylls. fal ye vpon vs and
couer vs with downes. for ye shall come
before the iudycyall barre of Christ/ and
the greuous complaynt of the people
shalbe hard agaynst you/ the sore accusa-
tion of the by whose almes and styppen-
des ye were sustented and haue not was-
hed away the synnys of them to whom
ye were veray bynd leders and dysceyt-
full medyatours. ¶ thou seest what plea-
sure syndest thou than in thy delycous-
nes/ how do thy riches delyte thyn eyes
wherewith thou hast bought the so ter-
rible a iugement / soo intollerable and
eternall penyment / & hast bound thy

selfe vnto

of prestes.

selfe vnto so straye an accompt/ for why
all that thou hast vnto the last farthyng
shalbe taken away from the / but now
let regulars marke what the holy anoin
ted saynt Bernard (beyng taught by the
holy ghost) wrote vnto one fhalco a wel;
disposed regular hauninge no more but
one benefyce / whiche fhalco also after
ward was made a byshop sayeng thus.
Thou ryst by at bygyllles / thou goyst
vnto masses / thou vlyst the quere bothe
in the hours of the nyght and eke of the
day. This doyeng thou dost well and ta
kyst not the prebendes of the church for
nothyng / for it is mete that he that ser
ueth the altare do lyue by the altare. I
wyl he shulde lyue by the altare / but I
wyl not that he shulde be proud / lecher
ous / nor ryche / nor by the goodes of the
clergye of a poore man to be made a ryche
man / nor of a meane man to be made a
glorious man. Of the goodes of the
church he may buyde hym no great
palaycs no petyous maners / or dwellyn
ge houses. Turpously kerued / peynted /
or gylted / he may gather no bagges of
money too gethere / he maye not

destroy and

The lyfe

destrope and expend the goodes of the
poore people in such vanpte or superflu
yte / he may not exalte or ymote his ne
uewes / or kynnsfolke with the goodes of
the church / and I was about to say / he
shuld not mary his sonnes / or doughters
therwith / but now let it passe . It is gra
tyd vnto the (yf thou serue the altare)
that thou shalt be susteyned by the altar
but to the entent that thou shuld bye the
no golden bypels / paynted sadles / syluer
spors / soft and fyne furre of chaunge
able colours / to be set in ryche apparell /
and to hange aboute theyr neckys & vpp
theyr handes . Than we muste conclude
that what soeuer thou retaynest of the
goodes of the church / except necessary
foode and apparayle / it is not thynne / but
it is theft robbry and sacriledge . Alas
what man in the begynnyng of the esta
te of regulars wolde haue thought that
they wold hane tumblyd downe in to so
great rupne . But whan a lypyll and a ly
tyl man began more greuously to offend
so that boldenes had hardened his harte
in vice without shame / insomuch that he
keepd it not / than this desperate / vnhap
pynes began . For a wycked prest whan
he comyth vnto the bottom of synne / set
lyth not

of prestes.

syth not a paynt therby / nor fearyth to
 present hymselfe to the face of god/bold-
 ly entryng into the church / as yf it were
 an howshold scruaunt/than he goyth into
 the quere/be knylyth downe and kyslyth
 the altare with a theuplshe mouthe / he
 thynklyth that he doth crakely/but how
 openly is his iniquyte foud to his great
 hated in the syght of god/ so than som
 of them do fall from fornyfacyon/ to in-
 cest and aduoutrie/but wold to god they
 had not fallen to the affeccyons of igno-
 mynce/and abhomynable lypng. Fur-
 thermore of these regulars holy sayncte
 Bernard wrote many other thynges of
 the ambytyon/and desyre of promotyon
 of clerkes / and how they be ashamed to
 be contentyd with a suffycient prebende
 but euermore they brette to hygher byg-
 nyte/ tyll at the last/ they fall downe as
 depe as the dyuel/and no mervayle that
 so cursyd conuersatyon is in the churche
 amonge them constitute in holy ordres/
 for they enter not into them by Chryste
 but by symonye / & many other perverse
 intencionys / sekynge god in pleasure and
 idelnes/ lypnge in vanyte and worldly
 desyre/ not seruyng god in sanctyte and
 iustice / or procedyng to god by a strait

The lyfe

of narrowe waye of helth/hauynge more
respekte vnto thynges temporall than
spiritual/ furdernore as holy saynt Ber
nard sayeth. Euery where men runne
hedlonge in to holy ordres without any
reuerence or consideratyon / and yet it is
a mystery worthy to be honourably my
nistred of spirituall angelz. But nowe
adayes they make men prestes in whom
auarice reygneeth/ambytion gouernyth
pypde hath domynacyon / but iniquyte
and lechery veryth most rule. After this
facyon they coueple & runne to the dyg
nytees and charges of the churche / as
though they ought to lyue without char
ge / whan they come to theyr honoures
and charges. Truly they do not ponder
the bourdoug anneryd vnto the charge/
nother they do beholde what iudgement
they stande in. whom verily (the more
negligent they be in theyr accompt/ the
more at lybertye and plesure that they
lyue) the more intollicable shall theyr da
nacyon appoche vnto them.

How they ought to pray/
syng/ and say the scrupce
of almyghty god.

For by cause

of prestes.

For by cause it is the chiefe exercise of
regulars (or els it ought to be) conti-
nually to be occupied in orisons &
prayer to god/and in syngynge thei di-
uine howres. Therfore we shall breuely
touch how god ought to be laudyd and
prayed vnto. But in the meane tyme/ I
purpose somewhat to declare howe inces-
santly and feruently we haue nede to cal
vpon god. For firste it appereth of the part
of the place wherein we do dwell. For ye
know we inhabyte in this wycked world
as in a great cyle/in a vale of tearys and
mornynge in a spide fully beseged with
most cruel craftye and stronge enemyes/
by whom we be dayly in great peryll &
daungere / for our inuisible aduersaries
do neuer slepe / but euermore they ley a-
wayte and go aboute to cast vs downe in
great aduersyte & with them to wrappe
vs in eternall damnation. And truly we
be betrayd bytyl and weke to resyst them.
Therfore as well of the parte of the place
as of the parte of y^e daungere & gynnes in
whom we be dayly set & couersaunt & al-
so of the parte of our gostly enemyes/we
haue greate nede to fle vnto God/ with
prayer/ and moste affectuouly to desyre
his helpe comfort and defence.

I.ii.

Especially

The lyfe

Especially and forbycause we do dayly & euerywhere byynge with vs our domestly call aduersary (that is to say) our owne bodye whiche greuyth our soule depres- syth our vnderstandynge / and besydes that induceth a thousand impedymētes of spiritual profet. Secondaryly it appe- ryth howe feruently it behouyth to pray god for a great cause the which we haue to do with hym before hand. And this is the matter/forbycause we haue despyed to take eternall damnation. Therfore of ryght we ought to serue god/and thereby to obteyne euerlastyng ioy. And fether yf men so affectuously and lamentably be entrete/for the conseruation & defence of this thort and present corporall lyfe . yf also people do so mekely and instastly desyre god for worldly prosperyte/ howe much more mekely / and feruently doth it become vs to besech the mercy of god for escappynge perpetuall damnation/for vertue also to preuayle agaynst all temp- tatyons/for the obteynig of euerlastyng helth/for enery gyfte of grace necessarye to combye and deserue so great and infi- nite blysse. Thirdly it apperith for that: that so oftentymes and so greuously we haue offendyd god / and dayly do dys-
honor

of prestres.

nour hym. Therfore Climacus sayeth
that by cōsideration of them that be gyl
ty of deeth/ ye may lerne how ye ought to
pray vnto god. For yf theues or murder
ers beynge taken by a pryncce/ or great
man/ haue any hope or truste to escape/
they wpll knele downe byfoze hym whō
they haue offendyd & with great humy
lyte and seruent affectyon desyre pardon
promysynge to amende and that euer af
ter vnto the tyme of deeth they wpll hum
ble them selfe and be veray dyligent to
do that pryncce or great man veray sayth
full seruyce / much more we abhomyna
ble wretchis / whiche tymes innumera
ble haue deseruyd eternall damnatyon /
ought after the same maner to cal vpon
god euerlastyng/ which graunteth hope
to them that be penitent and promyseth
pardon to them that be contryte. Furder
more we may ponder a part by god hym
selfe and by his maicste / howe and after
what facyon we oughte to pray vnto
hym. For fyrst yf we cōsider the infynite
maicste/dignite/holynes/ and honour of
god most blecspd & gloryous/ we oughte
to desyre hym of pardon with al reuerēce
subiection/and humylyte. For yf the my
nystris of kyngs & prelates in this world

J.iii. do so

The lyfe

do so mekely/reuerently/& lyke subiectes
worshyp them/muche more we ought to
do honour and reuerence(and not with-
out great humyltye & subiection) vnto
the cuerlastyng/and most incomparable
kyng of heuen/ moreouer consideryng
p^r most fauorable goodnes of god behol-
dyng vs/we ought to cal vpon his grace
with a dyligent custodie of hart/ with a
veray cyrcumspecte attendaunce to pon-
der the sense of our wordes/thynkyng vt-
terly to refrayne from all vnscrupthull
dyggressyon. Consideryng also the infyn-
te mercy and reward of god/we ought to
pray vnto hym with great hope and co-
fidence. And fether in consideracyon of
godly iustice we ought to pray vnto hym
with feare & tremblyng/moreouer consi-
deryng our owne transgressyon & offen-
ces/we ought to pray vnto hym /with in-
ward contrition mekely knowledgyng
our offences/to our great pffet. And tru-
ly cōsideringe our owne necessitye/infy-
myte/& redynes to vyce & myscheyf/ we
ought euermore with sore sighyng & la-
mentacyon to desyre his grace of mercy
for as our saupour hymselfe sayeth. It
behouyth for to pray and neuer cease.
Consideryng also our owne small deser-
uyng we ought louyngly & wth great me-

of prestes.

knes to call vpon god puttynge our onely
sepyth hope and trust in his mercy / euen
as creatures of veray small and weake
power. Of these consideracions for the
most parte it appereth/how attēptly/re
uerently/distinctly/affectuouly/pleasū
ly to god/seriously/ mekely/purely/& dy
cretely we ought to laude & honour god
in syngynge. Therfor sayeth saynt Ber
nard in this wyse. Most welbelouyd bre
therne/allwayes I exhort you/ y^e boldly
ye appere in your diuine seruice / & that
duely / & reuerently ye resort vnto it/not
slowly heuily or slepygly not sparyng your
voyses whā ye shuld syng/not pnoūcing
halfe wordes & somtyme eschpyppynge the
hole/not sowynge the softly as it were a
woma that sang thorough the nose/but
to pnoūce such holy & gostly wordes wth a
manly brest & affection/with so good dy
sposytion that ye shuld seme to imagine
or thinke that thing y^e ye sang/ but alas
there be many regulares now a daies
in that point found greatly i defaulte/ for
they syng to rashely not pawling in the
middis/nother reuerently nor seriously stā
ding lyke good dyscyples before god/but
sone absenting the self fro diuine seruyce
cōming tarde into the quyre/but yet wyl
go out wyth the fyrst. J.iiii. And

The lyfe

And howe can they be intently gyuen
to the sence of such gostly wordes / whan
they pronounce them so hastily and indis-
cretly / but wolde god that they wolde
harken to this that is sayed of them .
Cursyd is that man / that woth the werke
of god negligently . And also that which
god spake by the prophet Isaie and whi-
che Christus hymselfe reherfed in the gos-
pell on this facyon . The people do ho-
nour me with theyr lypis / but the hart
of them is farre from me . what answere
wyl these people make to the hyghe iud-
ge / which dyligently haue occupied such
thynges as pertyned to the fleshe and
so longe tyme in them haue remayned /
which tyme late to mattens / & synne it
so quikly peyn as they do other houres
They spt also muche longer / at theyr dy-
ners / suppers / feastes / bakettes / games /
playes / and dysportes than nature neces-
site or reson wold requyre . Wierly full
sone they dyspatche them selfe from all
thyng that is godly / and consernynge
the welth of soules and at all tymes lede
theyr lyf peruersly . Therfor let them re-
pent and flake no more the due tyme of
the dyuine scrupce of theyr maker / but
suche princypall and gostly wordis / let
them

of prestes.

them more principally dyligently & tymely execute. Furthermore there be some regulars that syng nothyng at all/ notwithstanding they stand in the quyer/ but they comaund and comyt it to chyl- dren and other syngers in the quyer.

But that custome semyth to be a corrup- tyon of religion and no lawe/ and to pro- ceede of no humyltye or deuotion/ but ra- ther of pryde abusyon or hatreded / where in tyme past not only the canons of ca- thedrall churches / but also the prelates themselfe were wont to syng with the quyer. Therfore let them marke what the apostle sayeth. He that labouryth not shal not eate. Is not the benefyce or deigned for hym that doth the offyce / or deute / for that cause the rentes of the church is due to none / but to such as do execute theyr offyces and labour in diu- ne seruice.

Whether descante may be comendable in the dyuine seruyce / and of cer- tayne thynges whiche ought to be eschewyd in songe

¶ The. xx. Articles. ¶

J. b.

Lpke

The lyfe

Like as it is declared in a certayne boke namyd/ *Summa virtutū et vitiōrum* / it is greatlye reprimand in synngnge the dyspnyce seruyce to sayne a voyce to much quaueryng or warbelyng eyther for pryde/ vainglozye/ or pleasure. For as saynt Gregoie sayth. whylste they sayne warblyng voyces / they let slyp all good deuotion / lykewylse in synngnge diuine seruyce ouermuche lowdenes and mountynge of the voyce is not comendable nor lykewylse the rollynge of it/ nor also to much swyftnes or to dragge ouerlong at the latterēde/ & to skyppe ouer the rest or pausinge in the myddes. And specially when the song is so swyft that it is make all to nought. For our a question may be mouyd whither descā or breking of the voyce may lawdably be sufferyd in goddes seruyce/ vpo that in y^e said notable boke of *Summa* it is wyrtē thus. Breakyng of the voyce or descāte semyth to be nothyng comendable in y^e diuine seruyce/ wherupō it is redde in the legend of saynt Sebast. that y^elone is to be estemyd no right chrystian/ which is in a maner weddid vnto the barbour/ which trimeth his bushe/ which seketh swete sauiours/ & breakyth his voyce/ for breking of the voyce semyth to betoken a broken

of prestes.

mynde / eyn as the turnyng i of the hed
is nothyng cōdable vnto men / noz the
great rollys of playtes in the garnētes
of womē / more is descāt vnto syngers.
And lyke as the wynde is wonte to reple
wv great plentie of wavis & surges / eyn
so the wynd of vanyte is the cause of all
this quauers & surges in singyng / these
thyngs ar cōtaynid in the foresaid boke
of summa / wherby it is purpōd p^t they
that vse such maner of singyng / do vtter
it for nothyng els but for theyr vainglo-
ry & wātoncs of mynde which .ii. thyngs
do cōspyt i theyr nyce singig / for yf it wer
excusable or to be cōmēdyd for any cause
it shulde be onlie done for excyting & sty-
ryng the people vnto deuotion / for some
folks by reason of suche melodies / ar
greatly mouyd vnto cōtēplacyō & deu-
cion for which cause also organes ar blid
in the church . wherupon saynt Augu-
stine sayeth . As often as the songe is
more delectable vnto me / then the dite / so
oftē I knowledge that I do synne penal-
ly / & then had I rather to herte no song at
al / furthermoz although that descāt spe-
cially puokith some vnto deuotiō & heu-
ly cōtemplacion / yet for al that it semith
greatly to reuoke & let some frō p^e minde
of theyr oþwv prayours .

The lyfe

For god from whome nothyng is vnlaw-
full do is hydden do he not loke after
the plesauntnes of the voyce/ but the pu-
ryte of harte .

Expente some that wolde be excusid fro
the obseruaunce of such thyngs that
regulars/ar specially bounden to
do/sayenge that the dygnite
of the church requyret
none other sacpon
then hath ben
vsyd in tymes
passyd.

Durid the maker of Psalmis byd
not w^out cause praye this prayer
vnto god sayenge . Let not myne
harte inclyne vnto the wordis of malig-
nyte / for to inuente excusis in synne .
Surelye this maner of excusynge cau-
syth many to be incorrigible & unrulye.
Let none therfore excuse hymselfe from
the obseruaunce or keppng of the thyngs
before specified/sayeng. we can not lye
nowe a dayes / as our predecessours and
elders haue lpyed in tymes passyd(that
is to wyte. For to be cōuenyent with ne-
cessarye

of prestes.

cessarye lyuynge/ syngle araye/ and one
benefyce. But for the honestye/ and wor-
thynges of the churche/ we haue nede of
many moo thynges/ and we muste kepe
hospytalyte/ and be clothed & fedde/ ac-
cording to the dygnyte of oure estate/
degree/ and orde/ & to mayntayne good
householders vnto the whiche maner of
exercis/ and suche lyke caupllations/ and
perswasions/ wherby many deceyue the-
selues and other to/ this aunswere may
be made. Howe it is conuenient that re-
ligious persones/ and al other within ho-
ly orders/ shuld haue theyr lyuing/ theyr
clothyng/ theyr mayntenaunce/ & keepynge
after an honest sorte/ and accordynge to
the degree that they ar callyd vnto/ and
as it is conuenient for theyr degree/ estate
orde/ and dygnyte. But wolde god they
wolde substaunciallye/ and cunlye con-
sydye/ what belongyth vnto theyr very
honestie/ and to theyr conuenient appa-
rall/ and furnysshynge. For whatsoeuer
thyng is contrarie vnto vertue/ thesame
is also contrarye vnto the true and com-
mendable honestye. Forasmuch as good-
nes & honestye (accordynge to the mynde
of phylosophers and doctours) callyd so
bycause of theyr owne nature and pro-
pertie

The lyfe

perthe they do allure intyse / & cause men
to desyre them for theyr owne sake / & for
none other respecte / as wysedom / science
& vertue / lyke as the phylosopher wy-
teth in his fyrst booke (de anima) herewith
sayth Isidore / that honestie is as muche
to say as the state of honour / by cause ho-
nour is due vnto wysedom and vertue / &
also vnto dignyte: which ought to be fur-
nyshe with wysedom and vertue / is
to be whatsoeuer therfore is contrarye
vnto / wysedom and Vertue / Acmyde
vnhonest / and contrary vnto the perfy-
tences of lypng. wherfore the honestye
of spirytual mynystres standith in holpe
and perfyte humylite: greate pacience:
myldenes: obedience: charyte: all chasty-
te: diligence: sobrenes: & gyuynge good
example / true Justice / mercye / lyberalite
and other lyke vertues / gyftes / and gra-
ces of the holy ghoſte / in the despyrlyng
of erthlye thynges / in the desyre and con-
templacyon of heuenlye thynges / not
in the excelle / and superfluyte / costlynes /
curpouslyte / delicatnes / and pleasure of ap-
pareyll / in mete: in drynke / and in sump-

of prestes,

tuos houses / not in royall housekepyng
in multeplenge of ryches / and haboun-
daunce of householdestuffe & other lyke .

For in suche maner of thynges the very
dygnyte worshyp comlynes and honesty
of ecclesiastiques doth stande as the Apo-
stle witnessyth wyspunge vnto Tymo-
thee / that woman shulde praye in conue-
nient aray: meke : symple: and deuoute
not in costlye : pompous : trymne : and
ryche apparell: for the most holpe Chief
sayne of thapostles saith : be ye not clo-
thyd with ryche apparayll / and perlys .

In this poynte therfore consisteth the
very honestye and dygnyte of religious
persones and prestes that (asmoch as is
possyble) they shall endeouour for to vse
themselups accordyng to the comaun-
dementes / decrees / rulyes / tradyctions / and
steppys of Christ: thapostles: and holpe
fathers. And so by gpyng good exam-
ple / Dyligence and / Spirituall conuer-
sacion they shall edifye the Unlearnyd
people & haue a good sauour vnto god /
and shall glozifie god in perfyte luyng

and

The lyfe

and seruyng hym with all chastite/ sober-
nes/ and diligence in doyng the diuine
seruyce/in simple & necessarye clothyng
in charyte/ deuocion/ & the other vertues
before touchyd. And in so doyng they
shall obey / subdue / and confirme them
selues vnto theyr pryncce / theyr Lorde /
theyr bishop / theyr master / theyr teacher
and theyr iudge that is Iesu Christ / for
in euery ordre & degree there is one thing
whiche is chief and superiour / the whiche
thyng is a rule and a measure of thyngs
more lasse & inferiour / so that the more
that they be lyke & confor[m]able to theyr
hed and superiour / they are somuche the
more p[er]feyte in theyr proper nature & de-
gree / and the further that they vary and
differ from it somuch the more vnperfeyt
they be. M[er]cyng therfore that Christe is
the fyrste and chief hed measure and rule
of al faithfull people that be of this con-
gregation or churche / somuch the more
at all christen people to be estemyd good
vertuous / holy / and honest / in that they
folowe Christe theyr hed in whom was
all honestye / vertu and goodnes. Ther-
fore the true honestye of spirituall mynys-
tres consisteth in this poynte / which is
to folowe Christes humylite / charite /
iustice

of prestes.

lustice/good example/mercy/sobrienes/
cleannes/ accordyng vnto the rulys/ and
decrees of holye fathes / not to fede
theyr helpes belycatylle / whereby they
ar prouokyd vnto bodely luste / not to be
arrayed in gorgeous appareyll. But that
they shulde be somuch the more vertuous/
holy/ sobre/ chaste / and good/ in respecte
of the laye people / as they ar set in more
hygh estate and dygnite. Moreover it
is prouyd by comon experyence & teachyng
that such relygyous persones as ar ver-
tuos/ and chaste in theyr conuersacion/ of
whiche there is almost (the more ppte) as
great plente as is of whit crowes/ ar more
set by/ more welbelouyd/ much better re-
gardyd among the comune people/ then
ar the other sorte. But how straitlye the
superfluite of goodes/ incontynence of ly-
uynge/ and sumptuosnes of appareyll/ is
forbydden vnto clerkys / is sufficientlye
declaryd in the.xi.article wherein among
other thynges it is conteynyd thus. All
maner of starvynge and gorgeous appa-
reyll/shuld not be vsyd among spirytual
persones wherfore it is veray mete that
such byshopes and clerkes as cloth them
selups in tyme costlye appareyll shuld be
restraynyd. For in tyme past such as were

A.

of spirytual

The lyfe

of spirituall estate were contentyd with
symple and mean aray. Finally the holy
Apostles folowyd the same persyte hone
sty of they: After Christ wherof men
cion is made before/whose example holy
Bishopes with they: clerkes did allways
folow not only durynge the persecucion
of the church/ but also longe yns both
in the tyme of saynt Gregorie/ and also
of saynt Bernard what tyme holy chur
che was in much higher/ and more gloyp
ous estate then it is now/ for the byssch
fathers before namyd byd most vehemēt
ly rebuke mynstres of the church for
they: excelle/ superfluyte/ curiolite/ auar
tyce/ & viciuous lyuynge/ asseympnyng that
they ar specially bounden to be couētyd
with symple fare/ and symple clothynge/
and other lyke vertues as ar spoken of
before. Therefore let them not excuse the
selues from the obseruaunce of suche
thynges / but rather applye themselves
(asmuch as is possible) vnto vertuous ly
uynge which is persyte honestly accordyng
to y^e rule that is cryslyd in the begyn
nyng of the thyrde boke of decrees.

And furthir as they ar cōmaū
dyd in the canons of holy fa
thers and hyge bishopes.

Of the

of prelates.

Of the danger that is in plurality of
benefices. We haue now declared su-
ficiently how chaste / how symonious / and
how sobre / all clerkes / religious / and all
that be within holy orders ought for to
be and in lyke maner how they ar bound
den to eschew all maner of pryde / excess
and wastful pompe in theyr apparell
theyr stuf / and theyr houses / and to be
contentyd with symple fere / and symple
clothyng / whiche order if they wolde
observe / yndoubtfully they myghte
comprende with a mycate benefice / but
forasmuch as they observe not the thynges
before specified but wyll haue supfluous
of all thynges / as of riches / of good con-
spareyall / of scripturall lere / and such
lyke prouisions / yhaunto rulers / and
such men of the world / no meteable
therefore if they procure to haue many
benefices. But howe peryllous it is to
haue plurality of benefices / the true ca-
tholique / and famous doctours afore-
named that is to wote saynt Thomas /
wyllyam of qzaris / Raymundus / and
the authour of the booke callyd Summa
Virtutum & Vitiarum / and many other
haue sufficiently declared / out of

R. II. whose

The lyfe

Whose workis specially I haue gathered
this litle treatyse agaynst pluralite of be-
nefices that now a dayes is euery where
vsyd. But the effecte of theyr myndes co-
sisteth in this pointe/that suche as haue
more benefices then one (excepte it be in
certayne casys hereafter to be touchyd)
do robbe god of his seruyce/ do dysmem-
ber the church in dysmynyshynge the ius-
te nymbre of her mynystres / do spoyle
the poore and the neede of theyr almes /
the dead soules of theyr suffrages / & sy-
nally deceyue the good entents of theyr
foundours and patrons. Wherfor ther-
fore that contrary to the holloste coun-
sell and doctrine of so many and solemne
doctours and holpe fathers they haue
conceyted to haue pluralite of benefices /
they put themselves in great perill (and
to be playnt) for theyr theyr compeete dead
lyesyne. Wherupon wylliam of Paris
wyrteth in this wyse/verely the hauyng
of spirituall possessions is very daunge-
rous/whiche ought not to be gyven/but
only to such as deserue them/for the whi-
che cause good and holpe men haue ben
daungerous to receyue them. And all y-
myght be sayd besydes theyr necessary
sustenance/they vsyd to distribut vnto the
poore

of prestes.

poore / to the churche they shulde supplie
 theyr defautes in prayeng & doyng good
 dedys / wherupon the holy father saynt
 Bernard sayeth / that a clerke hauynge
 suffycient about his necessarie chargys/
 and coueytynge to get more / is a church
 robber / and synneth damnable. More-
 ouer the sayd holy father saynt Bernard
 wrytynge to a certayne regular that had
 but one benefice howmuch so euer (sayth
 he) that thou dost retayne and kepe of p^e
 goodes of thy churche besydes a symple
 and a competent syndynge for thy selfe
 thinke it not thyne owne / but rather that
 it is stolen and robbed out of the church
 what thyng can be spoken more playnly
 or more terriblye. Dought not he to be
 estempe blynde & past all grace that wyl
 not regarde / ne feare the wordis of these
 holy fathers. Now yf it be so meant / for
 the hauynge of one benefice / with howe
 many Theftys / Robbories / Wybe-
 ries and Sacrilege / at they entanglyd /
 the whiche beynge not content with one
 benefice or two / wyl purchase vnyons/
 pluralities / totquoties / &e hole hepes of
 benefices. Certaynlye yf acordynge to
 the matiers before alledgyd / all that be
 wedydly synne / haue no right to p^e goodys

It.iii.

of the

The lyte

of the church/ nor yet to p^ro^uide benefice
that is / then muste it be grauntyd that
such as haue more benefices then one/ as
playne theuys and church robbers. And
yf they alledge the dyspensation of my
lorde the Pope/ we knowe well ynough
that his fatherhod can not dyspense with
concupiscence/ ambition/ pryde/ and iccherie/
excepte it be his pleasure to vsurpe vpon
the law of god/ for yf it shulde be tryed in
the court of conscience/ or before god. I
dare boldlye saye that his dyspensation
myght not be allowyd without it were
some vrgent cause/ that is/ yf it were con-
ceyted for verry necessyte/ or for manifest
dyspente/ whiche excusyth no man for the
kepyng of many benefices / nor may be
lawfullye admytted / excepte it be in cer-
teyne casys hereafter to be touchyd.
Moreover by the lawe of god we ought
not to possesse more then temporall goodes/
then as necessarye for vs/ hauyng regard
vnto spirytuall gyftes of grace and to
our saluacion / that is to lyue well / and
to obtayne the lyte euerlastyng. Be that
hath one competent benefyce / I wolde
knowe of hym/ for what cause/ what pur-
pose to what entent he wolde retayne /
or els go about to retayne any more / for
ether it must be to the entent for to ha-

of prebendes.

the habundance of temporall goodes (whiche is vnlawfull when one hath a sufficient luyng) orels for to lyue more spiritually/ and to exercise charitable workis/ and for to growe to further perfection/ whiche can not come that waye/ for the goodes that they get by hauing manye benefices causeth them to be more vniquiet/ and troublid in mynde/ wherby they haue great occasion to lyue more at pleasure and viciously. Besydes this wylliam of Paris/ and dyuerse other great clerkes to proue dyuers ways that whosoever hath pluralyte of benefices (except it be in certayne casys hereafter to be touchyd) is bounden to saye as many payres of mattynes as he hath benefices. And so he dothe daylye incurre as many deadly synnes/ as he leuyth payers of mattynes vnsayd. The sayd Doctours also/ & many other affyrme/ that whosoever is in deadly synne/ he synneth deadly as he procurith to haue spiritual goodes which are apoynted for none other but for suche as deserue them/ howe be it there are certayne casys where it is lesul to haue more benefices/ or prebendes then one/ which after the myndes of doctours are suche as here folowe.

R.iii.

The

The lyte

The fyrste is / where the benefyce is not
suffycient to fynde one preste his copetēt
sustenaunce and clothyng. The secound
is / where one benefyce is annexyd to ano
ther. The thyrde is / where there is defaut
and lacke of prestes. The fourth is yf the
church be appendāt to a prebete / or such
lyke dygnite. The fyfte is / yf one haue a
iuste tytlic to one benefyce for a tyme / and
another in comendā vn / yll the effecte of
the cause do ceasse. Also there maye be
added the syxte cause / whiche is / yf one
be in seruaice for the comune profite of y^e
churche as to be a prechour / or in lyke
office. wherfore accordyng to the premys
ses / it maye be cōsumyd lightly how much
is sufficient for the reasonable lyuyng of
a clerke / yf it be remembryd how they ar
bownten to lyue chastely / sobriely / mekely
moderately : and gyuyng good example.
Quer this we maye lerne by experience yf
small reuenues ar sufficient / for suche as
vse the vertues befoze rehersyd / howbeit
we do graunte that the greater that a
clerke is in spirituall estate / the greater
benefyce he ought to haue. But plurali
te of benefices (excepte it be in the cases
be foze towchyd) is reprovoyd of all good
men / as beyng moste daungerous vnto
soule.

of prestes.

soule helthe/and therfore/accordeynge to
the counceyl of the doctours before alled-
gyd)it ought to be escheuyd of al psones
that entende the chyprian perfeccion.

Thewe prestes and such as ar of the
clergy / ar bounden to kepe
hospitalyte.

Mowe agayne there be many
of the clergy / that excuse the
haungynge of many benefices
with this pretense. It bebo-
uith vs (saye they) to maynteyn good ho-
spitalyte / ye & to make prouision for vn-
bydden gesses. wherfore to auoyde this
colouryd caupllacyon/ I wyl partely de-
clare/ vnto you what maner of hospitali-
te they ar bounden/ & that is none other
but one of the workys of mercie wherof
Christe sayth in his gospell that he wyl
put vs in remembraunce at the daye of
iugement/and wyl speake in this wise.
I was a straungier/ & ye wolde not take
me in. The which he speakith in the per-
sone of his membris/ and creatures/ the
poore & the nedy / and not in the person
of the riche and the myghty. At this sa-
yenge of our saupour ought all clerkys &
myppstres of the church specciallye to

R. b.

tremble

The lyfe

tremble and quake whiche haue not be-
 horowed nor fed the poore and neddy beg-
 gars. What wyl they aunswere whiche
 haue ben so negligent of the poore that
 scarcely they can fynde in theyr hartes to
 rewarde them with the fragmentes of
 theyr meate / or to asorde them lodgyng
 in theyr barnes. But yet they receyue
 great astatys/ eych men/ & officers/ with
 much reuerence/ they intertayne the with
 moch solemnite/ they refresh them delica-
 tely / and lodge them in softe beddinge.
 Let them here/ and amende the scrupys/ &
 endeuour to obserue that whiche Christ
 commaundith in the gospell. when thou
 makyst a feast/ sayth he/ do not cal ther-
 unto thy kynskfolke/ nor eych men/ or y^e
 be in authorite/ lest they recompense the
 agayne for it in this worlde: but call the
 poole / and the feble/ the blynde and the
 lame / & so thou shalt be blessyd / for they
 haue not to rewarde the/ but thou shalt be
 rewardeyd/ at the resurrecciō of the right
 wise. Marke well this plaine sentence/
 & moste holysome counsell. For with-
 standyng these sayenges at not so to be
 inderstoden but that spiritual possessi-
 ons may lawfully at some tyme vpon a
 resonable cause maye kepe conuenient
 hospitalite

of prestes.

hospytalyte in makinge. there to theyr
kyltolke/ and by lyke reason to such as be
ryche & in authoryte/ so they bite it but sel
dom/ & without excelle & pompe/ and to a
good entent. Wiste they do wrong to the
poore: & passe measure: furthermore as it
hath ben repectyd often here before/ the
possessions of the church / be the patri
mony of Christ/ the almes of the poore/
the wages of the seruauntes of god.

Therefore they ought to be conuerted to
suche vses and to none other. For saynt
Hierom sayth. It is Sacriledge to be
stowe the goodes of the poore vpon such
as ar not poore. And in another place.

They do synne deadly that bestow theyr
goodes vpon ryche folke/ for they make
oblacpon to the deuyll. And as it sayde
before/ for to gyue the goodes of the poore
to such as ar not poore/ is playne sacrile
ge/ for the possessions of the church ar p^e
patrimony of p^e poore/ & can not be deli
uered fro the but by thefte/ which is when
the impuistys of p^e church kepe any more
to them selues then theyr bare lyuynge.

Therefore (as saynt Hierom sayth) that
all suche as misuse the goodes of the
church / or that belongyth / vnto the
church bestowynge it in suche thynges /
as make

The lyfe

as make for theyr owne voluptuousnes & pleasure/be lyke vnto the scribes & pharisees. They therefore that mucce by y^e goodes of the churche/ and purchase landes therewith for to leue vnto theyr frendes and kynde women (I was about to haue sayed theyr sonnes & theyr daughters) that bestowe it vpon bayne and worldly hospitalyte/ in theyr so doyng/ comyte deadly synne as to spend it vpon ryche men or theyr carnall companions/ for whom they make sumptuous prouisi- on/ and can neuer be mery without such gastyngs / or if they hap to be callyd by the well come in all the haste to solace with them. Albeit that suche facions are specciallye forbydden vnto the clergie accordyng vnto the sayeng of Isidore which saythe thus. Clerkes ought to eschewe feastyng not only comune but also secrete/ and ought to fare meanly in sobrienes / for al such festyng is peryllous to Christe people for it both quenchyth deuocion & distropeth true cōtencion of hart/ & nouryssheth lechery/ and drawyth vnto it/ ydle wordes/ iestyng/ rapyng/ wyldenes/ the forgettyng of good werkes and much vnglacypous pastyme. And so the feare of almyghty god neglectyd and set a parte/ the

of prestes.

the synfull men regarde slenderly bothe
theyr soule helth. Therfore saynt Iohā/
Chrysostom and suche holpe men wolde
neuer be bydden vnto scabbies / nor lyke-
wysse wolde byd any other. In considera-
cion wherof (O ye Christen prestes/ and
true mynistres of the church) these great
daungerous/ often/ and deelycat feastyss.
Remembze well/ that a certayne prelate
that was both ryche and deuoute/ meryd
with remorse of conscience by inspiracy-
on of God sayd these wordes here folo-
wying. I am made ryche in goodes/ and
am a beggar in soule. I haue won world-
ly honour and haue loste god. I folowe
the courttes of pyennes / and am of coun-
sell with greate estates / and therby am
bannyshed the courtte of heuen. what
shuld I speake of hospitalite/ that rather
ought to be callyd hospitallite and mooste of
all shuld be don for baynglorpe / & not ra-
ther for the loue of Christe. For yf they
hap to send for men of ryches or authori-
te/ they receyue them with great honour
and reuerence/ and spend on them ryght
largely of the patrymonye of the cruce-
fixe. This is y^e hospitalite of this world
wherby ryche men are fed sumptuously to
the glozy of the dyuell/ and Christe whi-
che is

The lyte

the is perfitte charite is afflicted with de
spitages / with hungr / with thyestes /
with nakednes in his poore creatures /
for so lyte regaedyng the terribil in-
gements of god do syt amonge my ghe-
stes as Balthazar / mysydng the good
and the treasure of the poore in the de-
spyte of Chryste. Under the colour of fa-
the false hospitallite they make grete
feast / to men of authorite / & officers of
had al mozte sayd offenders / then is all
the chere loste / and grete unkyndnes
taken except one syt with them / and
kepe compaigne in drynkynge / and quas-
syng / yll some of them be as drunke as
beastes. ¶ The Judgement of suche
thynges shalbe comyspited vnto hym /
whose Judgement is secreete and there-
fore / the moze terribil inasmuche as
the goodes that they mysbestowe ar not
theyr owne. ¶ But at the almes of the
poore. Therfore as saynt Hierom sayth.
It is great shame that the poore shulde
be banysshed out of the houses of spry-
tly men / and in the steede of them take
rufflers / & waytyng mynnyons lyke vnto
temporall prynces.

¶ The oblacions of good people / for
nedy soules. The tythe of the poore / and
of the

of prelates.

of the symple: and the exactions and
oppressions of the poore/whiche rather
ought to get theyr bread with the swee-
t of theyr labours/ and not to haue mispen-
dyd the Labours of good people in such
vicious pleasures/ as in surteynge and
drunkenes/ to deuoure that other sweale
for. ¶ He that beholdeth the depences/
and spyeth aboue Cherubyn shall deter-
myne the causes of the poore/ when
they shall stande boldly before hym/
agaynst them that haue wronged them
and haue consumyd and mispent theyr
goodes in euill vses: and haue bestowed
vpon the ryche men/wherfore they shall
haue as great mede: as yf they had caste
water into the see. Howe wyll they ac-
complye this sayenge of scripture. He
hath dystributed and giuen to y^e poore.
But that prelate whome we alledgyd be-
fore vnderstode this perfyghtly: for he
saith that hospitalite which is a deede of
charyte ought to be shewyd and don: not
for bayngloze/ or any such carnall affec-
tion: but ought to procede from a good
mynd and a vertuous entent. wherfore to
conclude accordynge to the premises:
not only hospitalite but also al other cha-
ritable dedes & workes of mercy as wel bo-
(only as ghostely

The lyfe

ought to be exercepled of spiritual psones
after they: abylyte lyberallye/ lōuyngly:
and deuoutly/ but most of all they ought
to gouerne they: houses dyscretelye/ and
to corrye they: housholde seruantes with
good ex ample gyuyng both in worde &
dede/ and shulde rebuke suche as offende
thatly and charitably/ vsynge themsel
ues vnto all men bectuoslye/ mchely/ so
blye and iustlye.

Thether religious and men of the
church that are able to synde the
selues of they: owne patry
mony and substaunce may
lawfully conuerthe the
goods of the church
vnto they: owne
bles.

Accordyng to the myntes of saynt
Augustyne & saynt Thomas / not
onlye the wordys of our Mayster
Christe but also of other holy fathers/ at
of suffy cient authorite to bynde vs to the
folowynge of them wherfore we maye
much better/ and moze surely giue creden
ce vnto they: sayenges/ then the perswa
sions of certayne schole men that truste
they:

of prestes.

they: owne wyttes ouermuch/ wisshyng
the authoritees of holpe fathers / vnto
they: owne fantasie. And notwithstanding
dyng that some of them: in the questyon
before purposed: alledge that it may be
lawfully don. yet I thynke it more wyse
dom to folow the authorite of saynt Hier
rom/saint Bernard & other holy fathers/
then them. Also Pope Damasus sayth/
that a clerke which is founnen with the
goodes of his frendes/ yf he take any of
the church goodes/ doth comitte playne
sacryledg. And so doyng he eatyth and
drynketh his damnacion. But yf he ne
dyth/ & then takyth / it is rather a gyfte
then a takynge/ but yf he haue no neede
takyth/he stealeth. Likewise Prosperus
speakyth in this wyse. I can not well ex
presse/how great an offence they do com
mytte/ which when they are able to haue
of they: owne/do charge y^e church with
they: synning. And he sayth further that
holy men dyd possesse the goodes of the
churche not as possessioners but as pro
curatours/ and therfore they perceyving
that the goodes of the church were none
other but the gyftes of god/ oblacions
for synnes/ & the inherytaunce of the poore
they dyd not challenge them as they:

¶

owne

The iyle

pluist/but bestowyd it in as thyngs be-
quethyd to the poore. And dyd not re-
gard the haupngt of them/but kepte the
not to themselves/but for other/noz dyd
ndt procure to haue them with any coue-
tous entyt/but vpon a good wile to hel-
pe other. No with holwe greale reason
these holy fathers perswade vs/for such
as are able to lyue of theyr owne are not
accountyd in the noubre of the poore &
nedy/for whome the goodes of the chur-
che wer payded. And therfore it is more
wyled to inclyne to the myndes of these
holy fathers/then to such dreamers that
do not only teach the contrary / but also
do lyue contrarye. But if they wyl obiecte
agayne / that the goodes of the churche
belonge vnto the mynistres / & that they
ought to bles them as in rewarde of theyr
seruice. To this it may be aunsweryd/
that they are the goodes of none other/but
of suche as nede them / for yf the myn-
stres of the churche haue sufficient of
theyr owne/and for all that wyl emplye
them to theyr owne bles/it is damnable
and therfore they shulde be spent vpon
the poore / and the nedy for inasmuche
as tempozall thynges ought to be blyd
in charyta-

of prestes.

in charptable and ghostly workys: they
 shulde not bestow tēporall goodes other
 wyse then spiritually/that is when they
 be consumyd superfluously / where there
 is no nede / lyke as one that is hole of
 body and lusty hath no nede of a phys-
 ion/ but rather suche a one as is sycke
 tūll at ease. wherfore those clerkes that
 be ryche haue no wronge / though they
 lacke the profyttes of theyr tēporal-
 ties/ for therby they merite the heuynly
 rewarde and gyftes of grace/ which ar
 thousand tymes more to be desyred then
 tēporall thynges. And fynally it appe-
 ryth by the authorites here allecogyd
 howe greate peryll they ar / whiche ha-
 uynge sufficient of theyr propre goodes
 wll maynteyne themseluys with bene-
 fices of the church / spendynge all vpon
 theyr hynnsolke/ which after theyr degre
 ar able to lye well ynough. And contra-
 rie wyse they ar in as greate peryll that
 consume both patrymony and benefices
 raptously/and in carnal luyng. And con-
 sequentlye these two articles do agree
 with the sayenge of the famous Clerke
 maister Johan Bzowt.

The lyfe

No goodes of the churche (sayth he) can be spend in feastyng and bankettes to ryche men/ but with deadly synne/ for they are apoynted to the poore and at Chyristes patrimonie/ and purchasyd for vs by the passion of Chyriste/ to our inherytaunce/ wherfore we can not lawfully geue the to our owne frendes & kynnsfolke / onles they be poore & nede/ and that must be don only for Chyristes sake.

What maner of man a prelate/ deane/ or any heed ruler of regulars ought to be.

It is vniuersally knowen to be true/ as holy Dionysius teachyth. That in euery estate/ degree & ordre the chyef or heed/ ought to be at y^e tyme of his calling of so great perfection/ that with y^e abundaunce of his spirituall riches & vertue/ he myght inflame/ cleunce/ & illumynate/ such as be vnder hym & cause to lyue accordyng to the ordre & estate that they be callyd vnto. Therfor it appereth that a deane/ or heed ruler/ ought especialy to be fulfilld with al maner of vertuous exercise & obedience/ that (as it is sayd to apperteyne to regulars/ to y^e content that he may be an exaple / to all his regulars

of prestes .

regulars & other cōmittyd to his gouer
nauce/ and that he may religiously ex
horite them/ledyng them the ryght way
to the effecte of theyr ordre/ both openly
and secretely informyng them with ver
tue/dyscretly correctyng suche as wolde
forsake theyr ordre/ & also y^e he may cau
se the seruice of god to be dewly kept & p
formyd in the quyre/and that al fables &
wylidnes may be eschewyd as wel in the
quyre/ as thowhe all the church in the
tyme of diuine seruice. Neither he shal suf
fer any y^e be vnder his obedieñce to play
the wantons: or to speke any incōueniēt
wordes. He must be ful of good crample
at all tymes/ y^e & at the table(as moche
as he can) muste forbidd the eaters to vse
any vnlawfull cōmunicacion he muste
question with them of suche thynges as
wyl byld them in vertue/abhorryng all
wordes inordinate/studyeng & procuryng
with all his dyligens that theyr diuine
seruice be holcly/dyligently/deuoutely &
recurrently perfozmed and ended/geuyng
them crample in comynge oftentymes be
fore them to theyr regular houres or ser
uice. Furthermore(to his powre) he must
erquisitly procure/kepe and increase/the
welth of his church especally in spiritu
L.iii. all thynges

The lyfe

all thyngs / & yet more fervently prayeng
vnto almyghty god for them that be co-
mpted vnto hym; to the entet that such
thyng as he can not fulfyl or obtayne by
rebuke or correccid he may obtayne by
prayer / keeping alwaies an honest meane
bothe in his apparayle & also in his fare
let hym gladly prepare hymselfe cōty-
nually to mynystre and celebrate But dely-
gently let hym beware that he geue no
euil occasion to any man by inedyntency
or sklauder / or any other maner of wyse
not only beyng chaste and sobre / but also
the exāple of chastyte and sobrenes / and
ferther the greater number that he must
accept for vnto almyghty god / the more
make fearefull & deuoute he ought to kepe
hymselfe. And he that hath neede of much
graces & fauour how much necessary is it /
that he be ful of mekenes and humylyte;
howe incessantly ought he to embrace
our sauour Chyste. And conueniently
to shew hym selfe before god & man both
in his wordes apparayle goyeng lyuynge
and all his actes / pryde / ambystion / vaine
glory / and auarice haue vsyd to flatter
our rulers & princes of the church except
they were well groundyd & establyshed in
the feare of god & deuoute exercyse.

of pteles.

In lyke maner where pteles were wont
to be meke and gentyl now adayes they
be comunly proude and malitious. And
some of them for fere or fauour of man
or for some vyce rotyd in them selfe wyl
nothyng regard to fulfyl the correctyōs
of thyr predecessours wherunto they be
bounde as well of tharpte as of dewe in
duty but they loke more for thyr owne
honour & priuate profit/than for the ho-
nour of god or welth of mā's soule where
in yf they ons wallow/they do nothet re-
gard the spiritual felicitye of thyr subier-
tes nor yet of them selfe but blynded wth
ambition and couetyse they fall hedlong
into the depe dungynne of vice. Hereof
saynt Bernard in his boke de Considera-
tione wryteth to pope Eugentius in this
wyse. Thou being a man shalt not desper-
to haue domynacyon ouer another man:
lest al vneyghewysnes haue domynacyon
ouer the. For no popson nor yet pounthe-
ment ought to be more scryd of the than
the desyre or pleasure/or domynacyō. wher-
upon saynt Gregory sayeth thus. The
mynd of mā is proude ynough of it selfe
pe although it be incouraged wth no powet
or ptepnēce/ than much rather a man
wyl loke alofte whā pteernēt is geuep

The lyfe

For truly as oftentymes as any prelate deliteth to be a maister & ruler ouer men so oft he fallyth in to the synne of apostasy. And who so delyteth in this world to haue prehempnence/ he shall not delyte to behold his iudge Christe. This folyshe pryde a prelate myght sone overcome/ yf wysely profoundly & oftentymes he wold beholde and ponder y^e terrible rigour of goddes iudgement/ especially concerning prelates the extreme sharpnes of infernall punishment/ & also the great negligence of theyr owne lyfe. So a prelate shall repute his dignite as it were a peynfull bourden / & not as it were a pryde & honour/ & shalbe careful before god yf he marke the wordes of the apostle/ whiche be these. It is a fereful thyng to fall into the handes of god luyng/ remember therfore how enourme & damnable it is to gete any temporal comodite or honours by prelateship & not to fulfyll theyr due offices / nor yet to behaue the lyke worthy bycars of god.

Agaynst theyr pryde in buyldyng
Synge (as Hilarius declaryth in his boke callyd *Summa*) that clerkes do make treasour of suche substance as remaineth besydes theyr necessary & competent

of prodigies.

competent lpyng / other expendyng it in
 vnlawful vles/as in makyng ryche theyr
 frends; or hyussfolke/ or other splyth pso-
 nes wastyng & cōsumpnyng theyr money
 in gorgeous & delycate fare/getyng the
 fame of the worlde by great expensis/as
 geuyng liberall rewardis to gestours or
 mynstrels/ byeng in the sauour or frend-
 shipp of ryche & noble men encreasynge a
 superfluous household of seruantes whi-
 che oftetymes must be renewid with co-
 stly apparaile or framig great curious &
 sumptuous buyldyngs / or els in such o-
 ther lyke vles do prodigally expend the
 patrymony of Christ: me thynke in so do-
 yng they do not only offend i the synne of
 prodigalite as euerie man woth that abu-
 syth that thyng to his owne vlc/ whiche
 is cōmytted to hym with charge/ but al-
 so they make theyr offence more greuo-
 forbycause they do stele away so expen-
 dyd from thē that be the veray owners
 therof (that is to say) the poore people.
 Saynt Hierom callyth this synne a rob-
 by exceeding al cruelty of thefts: or els a
 sacriledge or church robbery/ furthermo-
 saynt Augustin callyth it playnly man-
 slaughter/sayeng thus. whosocuer immo-
 derately reserueth to his owne vse good;

The lyfe :

by god dedicate vnto the poore? is gilty
of the slaughter of so many men / as haue
ben poore & dyed in theyr houses for hun-
gre. These regulars therfore are bounde
to restitution of all such thyngs. Such also
as vnworthily haue receyvd any goodes
of the church are bound to restitution as
hoies harlottes & hawdes & other fylthy
persones of euill demeanour. Of these
thynges spekyth viricus whose wordes
in the treatyse agaynst pluralities of be-
nefices more playnly do appere. More-
ouer agaynst pryde in buyldynge certayn
thyngs be reherced in his booke callyd
Summa virtutum et viciorum / in this
manner. In buyldynge fyue thyngs be not
to be comendyd. The first is the multy-
tude of houses / and that agreeth wryth
the sayeng of the prophet Isaac in the v.
chapitre sayeng thus. wo may you be
which togne to gether house vpon house.
Offenders be in the same case whiche fo-
low not Christe sayeng thus. The sonne
of man hathe no place where he may
put his hed. The second thyng not to be
comendyd in buyldynge is the greatnes
sumptuousnes and pleasauntnes thereof.
The pleasauntnes truly is dyscernyd in
the colours and pictures thereof. Of this
also

of prelates.

also it is spoken in the .xiii. chapter of
the prophet Jeremie. **A**ldermore saynt
paul the first heremite beyng vesped
of y^e holy father Anthour/ asked a que-
styon whether chrysten men shuld folow
the facyon of the gentyls in theyr sump-
tuous buyldyng or no/ and he harde say
that ye. Than greatly he bewayled that
banke considering hit was the part of
a churken man to say on this facyon. we
have no dwellyng place in this worlde
but we do loke for a place in tyme to cum.
Therefore whatsoeuer regulates or mpy-
retes of the church do unmoderately ex-
pend in suche sumptuous buyldynges it
is cruell robbry and sacriledge as byfore
is sayde and also they are bound to restitu-
tion whiche restitution is to be done
vnto poore people but for all that there
be many now adayes whiche out of all
good ordre and facyon do erre in such
sumptuous and costly buyldynges.

Of certayne aunient lawes to
uoyde pluralities of benefices vpon
whome no dispensacion fallyth
as touchyng to that is in
them of the lawe
naturall.

By the

The lyfe

By the meanes of large lyberal & unreasonable dispensacions y^e church is brought to great confusion/and surely in tyme past holy & fereful popes & bysshops dyd innowyse admyt but euermore prouyde pluralitees of benefices which now adapes euery where be grafftyd to one particular person/y^e & oftentimes to hym that nother by his conuersacion or lernyng is worthy to haue one Therefore pope vrbane dyd institute that it shulde not be lawfull to any man to be inducte in to .ii. churches but euery man to be regular & residēt in one church only wherein he is inducte. Another institution also is conteigned in the decretals/ and that is this. A clerke fro this p^{re}sēt tyme shall not be nombryd in .ii. churches/for that is but a comodite of marchaundyse: or foule lucre/and the thyng that is most fere from the good ordye of the church wherupon the decree of pope Gregori is thus. we comaūd that al benefices of y^e church be comytted particularly to particular p^{er}sons. Furthermore saith Bernard alledged as saith Thomas dyd saye th^{at} One p^{er}son is not one/but many in respect of benefices/therfor they shalbe many in respect of they; p^{er}sonemēt for they; offence

of prestes.

fence is greuous. **Mozcower** As here
folowith. I wyl that who/so fortune to
rede this shall knowe that I (fro the in-
carnation of our lord god. 1437.) was
at Paris/ where the honourable willia
bishop there/ made a couocation of al p^r
maisters of the church/ where a question
was put forth of pluralite of benefices/ &
by long & discrete disputaciō it was app
uyd/ that. ii. benefices wherof the one did
amount vnto the value of. xv. pounds/ of
paryse myght not be kept to p^r welth of
manes soule/ & that this bishop of whom
we speke before w^t many other doctours
dyd spually determyne. And this thyng
is more plailly reherced i the werke made
against pluralytes of benefices/ as tou
chyng this matter pope Gregori p^r. ix.
beyng examyned whether by his power
he myght dispense with pluralite of bene-
fices or no/ he answered & sayd. I can dy
spense for nothyng of pluralites but only
for the penythment of such as kepe many
benefices/ & therfor let no man reioyce p^r
any man hath w^t hym dispensid for it is
but in bayne/ but bothe the law of god &
the lawe of nature is/ that noman ought
to coueyte or procure any more tēporall
goodes than is expediēt to vertuous lyfe
or hathe

A thantho
of p^r boke of
bees sayd.

The lyfe

of hath respect to spirytuall comodite
or vtiay saluarion. All these thynges
which here I do byeuely touch be moie
at large conteyned in the boke agaynst
pluralite of benefices. And verily we
doughte muche rather to gyue credaunce
vnto holy ferefull & famous doctours &
to good religious and wel disposed peo-
ple (whome before we haue namyd for
ministers) than to suche as haue. ii. bene-
fices or moe holwe cunnynge so euer they
seme to be. For in theyr owne matters
they may gyue an euill iudgment/as it
apperteyneth by this prouerbe. Loue and
hatred subuerteth euery iudgement.

An exhortacion vnto clerkes

The holy and moste deuoute father
Isidore Bernard sayeth as here fo-
loweth. Let clerkes fere let maysters &
prelates of y^e church fere/which behaue
them selfe so wyckedly in laudes of holy
fathers wherein they dwell / nat deying
reuerend with a competent spende of
faynyng that myght suffyse them but cru-
elly & theuysfully procuring & retaynyng
superfluous possessions where wiche the
poore people shulde be susteyned/ and the
same expending into theyr owne car-
nall & vayne vse/offending with double
iniquite/ for they do bothe spoyl othen

of prestes.

men of theyr goodes/ and also abuse the
holy and spirituall goodes & substance
in theyr fylth and vanprie. fauour I be-
seche ye/ laudour your selues/ laudour the
blode that was shed for your saluacion.
Beware of the horrible peryll and dan-
ger of hell decayne from the euellastynge
fyre that is preparyd for you. **Morne**
lament ye in the myddys of Babilon
that is to say in this wretched worlde/
and saue your soules/ flee to the eyces
of spiritual refreshynge ye is to becomen
glose cloysters that ye may do penance
for your synnes past that ye may ob-
tayne grace in this present lyfe. Be not
shackled wth knowledge your syn/ for where
is aboundaunce of iniquite there hathe
grace neede to be aboundant. Are nat the
sharpnes of penance greue you/ for the
penance of this worlde be nat abyng
able to couerayle our offences before
God. Therefore in conclusion **S.**
Bernard sayth. If regulers & other con-
stitute i holy ordres be nat redy to enter
in to religion/ it shalbe sufficient for the
biishopp to walke & be conuersant accordyng
to the effects wherunto they be callyd/ or
els affect the forme and ordre to them
publyshed expoundyd and commaun-
dyd in the thyrde boke of Decretalles

The lyfe

Let them also consider the vncertainty of
this world / of this present lyfe / the de-
lectable tythines of synne / the fauour and
mercy of goddes maiesty / & p^rsonnes of
tyme that god to vs hath enlarged / & p^r
it be not vnfuitfully exp^ded. Let vs
loke also how fearful our indygnity is / &
howe sharpe & intollicable the infer-
nall paye ment is for vs / p^r as god for-
dyd that we shuld so do / we lete our lyf in
earneste and neglygence. Therfor euery
day let them examyne theyr consciences &
remember the ende / that they may go by
a narrow strait way vnto saluatioun / let
them feruently vse the goodes of the chur-
che / beinge euermore remeysant in the
rule / subyctes / deuotion. And goodes am-
ple vnto the tyme the charite of this pre-
sent lyfe be consumed / than by the mercy
of god to be brought vnto the most bles-
syd state of euertlastyng felicity & ioyes
of heuyn / to the great laude & praise of god
omnipotent whiche is the most bygd
blyssed above all thynges. Amen.

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be
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